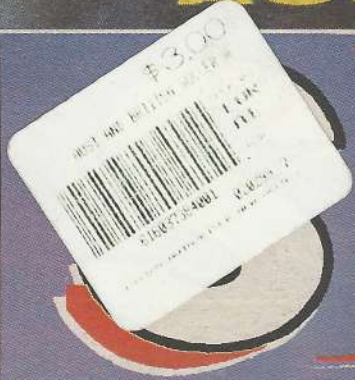


AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH



SOCCER

WEEKLY

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I AM THE LAW!

An in-depth cross-examination
by The Four Diegos
Page 7

Plus...

- Jimmy Patikas
 - Alan Hunter
 - Eddie Thomson
 - Brisbane Strikers
 - Triple dose of Greek Soccer
- ... and much, much more in
32 pages of soccer mayhem

SOCCER WEEKLY

AUSSIE & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

5-13 Garners Ave., Marrickville NSW 2204.

Tel (02) 9562-0559 (Direct Line) Fax (02) 9550-9332

E-mail: soccerweekly@hotmail.com

Published every Tuesday by FLP Pty Ltd. 5-13 Garners Ave., Marrickville NSW 2204

DISTRIBUTION

NSW/ACT: FLP Pty Ltd. 5-13 Garners Ave, Marrickville NSW 2204. Tel: (02) 9562-0500
VICTORIA: FLP Pty Ltd. 72-78 Gipps Street, Collingwood. 3066. Tel: (03) 9486-9522 Fax: (03) 9486-9858
QUEENSLAND: Queensland Newspaper Campbell St, Bowen Hills Qld. 4006 Tel: (07) 3252-6011
SOUTH AUSTRALIA: Advertiser Newspaper Ltd. Waymouth St, Adelaide SA 5000 Tel: (08) 8218-9329
WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Pan Hellenic Emporium, 67 James Street, Perth WA 6000. Tel: (08) 9328-4779

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Recommended and maximum price. \$3.00

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ARCHIE WRANGLE CONTINUES

By Dwyght Tuffnell

It is unlikely that Carlton new signing, Archie Thompson, will appear in a Blues shirt this season. Thompson comes out of contract at the end of this season and has signed with the Blues for next season.

Carlton offered the Falcons \$20,000, and then upped it to \$30,00 for the release of Thompson now, as a replacement for the recently departed Andy Vlahos.

But the Falcons have asked Carlton for \$50,000 if they want him immediately. Carlton said that they will not pay that much, just rather get him next season when they have him for free.

People close to the Gippsland club think there is still some ill-feeling between the two clubs over the transfer of Joe Tricarico.

These same people believe that the Falcons would be crazy not to accept \$30,000 for a player who they are going to lose without any compensation anyway.

The question, though, has to be asked: why Thompson hasn't already been signed up by the Falcons on a new contract?

As an Olyroo, and a very exciting player, he is the Falcons most marketable commodity, probably the last they would have wanted to lose.

Meanwhile, Melbourne Knights striker Harry Karl has gone back to his Premier League club, St Albans Saints. Karl had scored five goals for the Victorian strugglers but asked to be let go back to the Saints.

"He wanted to go back to St Albans" Knights new coach Joe Biskic said.

"I wanted him to stay but it was decision. He felt he couldn't do as much here as he would have liked." One of the Knights' new signings, Paul Magdic, made his first appearance for the season on Sunday, but the other new face at Knights Stadium, Lance Plunkett, is yet to make his debut.

There some good news on the injury front for the Knights with both Mijo Trupkovic and Tom Pondeljak playing full games and looking good for the Knights youth team on Sunday.

In other news ... Northern Spirit's Luke Casserly is currently trialling in Holland with NAC Breda. The Dutch club has a high regard for Australian players after Spirit's coach, Graham Arnold, had a very successful spell there some years ago.

It appears that Manfred Schaefer will still remain with Adelaide Sharks, despite being relieved of his first team coaching duties by the club, reports Ralph Barba.

Due to his watertight contract, it looks like the former Socceroo will be moved sideways to a role in junior development. The Sharks' new lamb to the slaughter is former coach Adrian Santrac.

Steve Darby, the former Sydney Olympic General Manager, who won last year's Malaysian Cup with second division side Johore, has achieved another milestone in his career.

The AFC (Asian Football Confederation) has now installed him as Confederation Instructor of Coaches in Malaysian Soccer. Good to see Steve doing well after he underwent surgery over Christmas.



The excitement machine Archie Thompson, currently in the middle of a stoush between Carlton and Falcons.

State League or Super League Players Wanted!

Do you want to play in a State League team with an ex-NSL player as coach?

The University of Technology is entering two teams in Division 5 State League competition and would like all players interested to attend the first training session on
Thursday 4 February 1999
from 6.30pm to 8.30pm at
Tempe Reserve, Tempe.

The coach of the new team has extensive NSL and Super League experience and is keen to develop a highly competitive team.

For further information, please contact
Matthew FitzGerald
on (02) 9980 8550 after hours.

Australian News

SKOKO NEXT AUSSIE IN SERIE A?

Roy Hay reports that former North Geelong midfielder and Socceroo Iosip Skoko is wanted by Italian Serie A giant Fiorentina according to expert Croatian Soccer commentator Ivan Roso.

Roso says that Fiorentina has made Hajduk Split an offer of around seven million German marks (\$A6.6 million), but the club values him more highly. Hajduk rates their playmaker as worth more than Mark Viduka, who seems at last to have come to terms with Celtic and has embarked on his career in Scotland.

The fans in Split are also keen to see Skoko stay, as the team is very young, and his distributional qualities are critical to its success.

Skoko has just returned to Split from Italy where the club was training during the winter shut-down in Croatia. Hajduk had a good win over a Parma side, and lost narrowly to another Serie A club. Hajduk will also have a couple of matches in Germany before the domestic season resumes.

What is a man who has played 43 full internationals for Uruguay, including the winning of the Copa America, doing in Singapore? The answer? He is the coach of the Fiji Olympic team, here for two weeks to play matches against the Singapore national soccer teams, reports Soccer Weekly's new Asia correspondent, and former Ericsson Cup player Scott O'Donnell.

So how did Washington Gonzalez, former player and coach with Parramatta Eagles end up coaching the Fiji Olympic team? After all, you would think a man with his credentials and experience would be swamped with offers. Not so.

After playing for all the top clubs in South America including: Nacional, Racing, River Plate, Boca Juniors and Penarol, Gonzalez was offered the opportunity to take his family to Australia. In Australia he enjoyed many successful seasons in the National League with Parramatta Eagles and is rated as one of the best defenders ever to have played there.

Former Socceroo captain Johnny Warren has been quoted as saying that he can't recall a player with a finer background to have played in Australia.

At age 35 Gonzalez decided to hang up his boots and was soon after appointed assistant coach at Parramatta. It wasn't long before he was handed the Head Coaches job.

Parramatta then persuaded Gonzalez to remain with the club which would play in the NSW Super League. In 1996, their first year in the Super League they won every trophy that was up for grabs however, due to financial constraints they were unable to retain his services for the 1997 season.

Gonzalez was then appointed as a staff coach for the Oceania region where he would run coaching courses around the region. It was at a coaching course in the Solomon Islands that he was offered the Fiji Olympic job. He said: "At the time I was only working part-time so when Fiji offered me the job I jumped at it."

"Hopefully we may surprise a few people here in Singapore," said Gonzalez.

Well surprise they did. Their first game against the Singapore Olympic team ended in a 1-1 draw in very wet conditions. Their second game was against a Singapore Selection which consisted of no less than six national team players. Fiji ran out winners 3-2.

Adelaide Sharks owner Con Makris said exclusively to SW last night that he is wasting his time investing his money in Adelaide Sharks if he does not see an investment on his return. "I have invested \$600,000. We have a problem with Hindmarsh stadium levies. We make no money from the ground so unless things change I don't see how we can survive in the NSL. And alot of clubs next year will probably not be in the league too, just a ten team comp is likely. I can tell you, Soccer needs people like me to put money into the game." He added that Manfred Schaefer, relieved of his first team coaching duties at the club over the weekend, was a gentleman and they remain on good terms.

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MEET YOUR SOCCER HEROES IN PERSON AT GRACE BROS

Throughout February Myer/Grace Bros celebrates the Ericsson Cup of Life with a massive Soccer extravaganza.

For a start, stores throughout the country are now stocking Ericsson Cup merchandise.

For example, Perth Glory gear can be found in the Perth City store; South Melbourne jerseys in the Melbourne City outlet; Sydney United apparel at Liverpool, Warringah and Sydney City branches; Marconi-Fairfield supporter gear can be purchased at Liverpool or Sydney City; Sydney Olympic soccer balls and clothing again from Sydney City, with Northern Spirit merchandise concept stores set up in the north shore heartland of Warringah and also within the Sydney City sport department. The Warringah store also has most of the other Ericsson Cup clubs' gear.

Not only is club gear available but Socceroo merchandise is available also, including jerseys, shorts and balls.

To coincide with the Myer/Grace Bros extravaganza, all four Sydney clubs have kindly offered fans the opportunity to meet the stars of the Ericsson Cup with numerous promotions being held in the Sport Department located on Level Four at Grace Bros Sydney City.

To start proceedings the Marconi-Fairfield Stallions will join staff in-store on Wednesday, February 10 between 1pm and 2pm. Sean Babic is believed to be confirmed as one of the players.

The following Wednesday the 17th fans have the opportunity to meet the Sydney United Pumas again between 1 and 2pm, and finally the mighty Northern Spirit will be there between 1.30 and 2.30pm on Thursday February 25.

The Sydney Olympic details were being confirmed as we went to press.

This will be the first of many promotions involving Australia's soccer superstars as Myer/Grace Bros Sport continues to build strong relationships with the clubs of Australian football.

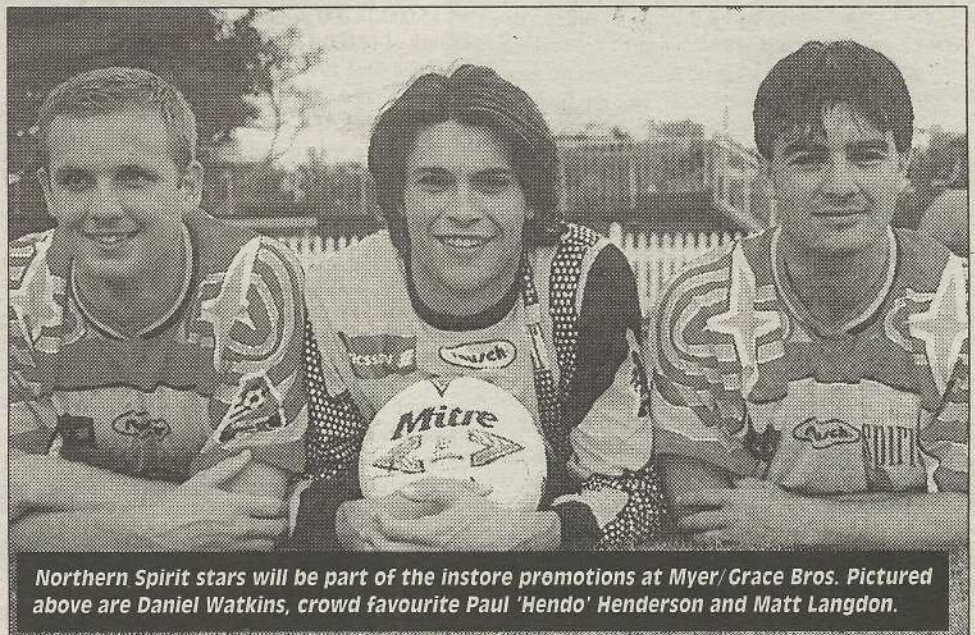
Perth Glory has announced the venue for any upcoming finals this season in the West. It will be Subiaco Oval.

Soccer Weekly hopes and prays that a ground will be built specifically for Soccer in Perth, for what is arguably the biggest Soccer club in Australia.

Get down to Breakers stadium tonight (Tuesday Feb 2 kick-off 7pm) for Newcastle Breakers versus crack South Korean outfit Hyundai Tigers.

The admission is free and you get a second game — Breakers youth playing a Korean B team, which starts at 5pm.

The proposed game next week (Feb 9) between Newcastle and another Korean team is now off.



Northern Spirit stars will be part of the instore promotions at Myer/Grace Bros. Pictured above are Daniel Watkins, crowd favourite Paul 'Hendo' Henderson and Matt Langdon.

It's all happening down Carlton way. Ever dreamed of playing soccer on Optus Oval? Well now you can! Enter a team in the 7-a-side tournament being held prior to the Carlton v Brisbane Strikers match, Sunday 21st February 1999. You receive a playing t-shirt and entry to the ground.

And join the Carlton Coaching Team for an intensive seminar on leading a soccer team to success.

See how Australia's most professional coaches run a club and lead a team to ultimate success, all run by the successful coaching staff at Carlton.

Each participant will receive a Carlton Coaching Top, Carlton Coaching Handbook, and entry to the Carlton v Sydney United match.

Also, keep an eye out for a special match day promotion between Carlton and Soccer Weekly, coming soon to Optus Oval.

And finally Carlton have their end-of-season black tie Ball on Friday June 4 at the Grand Hyatt. Eddie Krncevic and Moreira in tuxedos? It's got to be worth it.

Contact the club for details on all these upcoming events.

It is unclear whether Wolves player Alvin Iccelli's contract with AEK Athens is in fact a four-year deal as was previously thought and reported. It is possible that the Greek club will keep him until June and then decide about any long-term arrangements. The player left late last week.

And finally Soccer Weekly's player of the week is young Joel Griffiths of Sydney United. In front of 17,000 fans last

Have Your Say...

Wonderful meals are made of dishes like these. Piquantly flavoured and tantalising, low-fat, well dressed, so elegant and oh-so-chic.

Appetite isn't restricted only to food and these studs look good enough to eat.

Thank you for the stylish affair with the Marconi Stallions. It was a

big hit with the girls at work who never realised how sexy and great looking the NSL boys are.

Joe Bruni, Christian Care and Sean Babic ... Simply Irresistable.

Great shots Melbin.

**Tina,
Bossley Park**

Letters continued next page

SUPER SIX SOCCER

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Australian News

PARANOID AFL TAKES ANOTHER CHEAP SHOT

I am writing in response to the simplistic, ill informed and bias stance adopted by the discussion about the current status of Australian soccer with Paul Wade on Melbourne's 3AW's 'Sports Saturday' program on the 23rd January.

Your argument declaring that the so called, 'de-ethnicising' of the game, prevalent under the David Hill — Soccer Australia led administration, has set the game back in terms of spectator support and the financial stability of clubs, is both flawed and conveniently supportive of the vested interests your employers, 3AW and Channel Seven, have in Australian Rules Football.

LETTER TO EDITOR

The aim of this letter is not only to inform you about the current state of play in Australian soccer in this country but to also attempt to educate you in the complexities of a game clearly in transition.

FACTS PRIOR TO DAVID HILL ERA

Attendances at Ericsson Cup games were falling. The clubs were suffering from significant shortfalls of income and the league was in desperate need of a new image.

The Ericsson Cup clubs and Soccer Australia stakeholders concerned about the trends prevalent in domestic soccer with respect to diminishing crowd sizes and the rapidly deteriorating financial status of the game at the time, gave David Hill a mandate to restructure the game.

FACTS DURING DAVID HILL ERA

Expulsion of clubs — Brunswick Zebras, Parramatta Eagles and Heidelberg United, due to poor crowd sizes and financial instability.

Introduction of clubs — Perth Glory (average crowds of 15,000-18,000 people) — Northern Spirit (average crowds of 14,000-17,000 people)

Grand final 1997 in Brisbane — Brisbane Strikers v Sydney United attracted a record crowd 40,446 on the same day that AFL match between Brisbane Lions & Geelong attracted a crowd of 18,928 and an ARL match involving the Brisbane Broncos attracted a crowd of 14,167.

1997 World Cup qualifier — Australia v Iran attracted 90,000 people to the MCG and "generated \$ 2.7 million in ticket sales and had an economic impact of \$34.9 million for Victoria."

Geoff Wood (Melbourne Major Events).

CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

Some traditional clubs are unable to attract sponsorship, investment, crowds and hence are unable to generate enough funds to market their product effectively. Sydney United is on the verge of folding and others are certain to follow.

The imminent inclusion of the Auckland Kings into next season's competition gives Australian soccer access to a new untested market.

Big money consortiums, including Flying Start Promotions are vying for Ericsson Cup licenses in Sydney, Newcastle, Melbourne and Adelaide for the coming season.

OVERALL

David Hill failed to unite the different factions of Australian soccer. He failed to make the Ericsson Cup a prestigious competition worthy of the respect and genuine interest of Australian sports lovers.

There is no doubt that his methods led to the alienation of the traditional ethnic, support base of many clubs and this in turn, translated into fewer people supporting these traditional clubs.

Having said that, his philosophy, succeeded in giving us a glimpse of the Australian soccer club of the future, in the form of Perth Glory and Northern Spirit. There is now a greater emphasis on establishing stronger links with the Asian soccer market.

These facts coupled with FIFA's proposed world club competition, scheduled to commence in the near future, can rightly give us confidence that the game, although presently in a transitional, evolving phase, can in the future sustain a healthy national league and fulfill its true potential in this country.

To declare, as you did on your show, that this could never happen, displays an extremely narrow minded, arrogant view which makes me wonder about the motives behind your vociferous broadcasts proclaiming the death of the Ericsson Cup on your program each week.

If I chose to take a cynical view, I would argue that your motives are driven by a paranoia-fed need to perpetuate the myth that soccer in this country is only played by and enjoyed by ethnic groups and that it is a game that will never be adopted by all Australians, as a truly Australian sport, played well by Australians.

If you believe that a game the size of soccer on a global scale and played nationally by more young Australians than any other sport (Australian Bureau of Statistic figures published in 1998), can never translate into a significant participation and spectator sport in this country, then it is clear that you have been blinded by your own protectionist propaganda that is motivated by what you would like to see.

Perhaps its time for you to take note of AFL Chief Executive, Wayne Jackson when he says, "If we don't get a sound base in NSW and Queensland, we can't be here doing what we are doing in 15 year's time. We will be just run over. I think soccer is a huge threat, a very real threat to Australian football." (The Herald Sun, Oct 98).

It is clearly beneficial to you and your employers, 3AW and Channel Seven, to keep the game of soccer small and unappealing, your vested interest in a game such as Aussie Rules football, with a limited market, demands it.

But you can not deny that soccer is a world phenomenon. When Aussie Rules has succeeded in saturating the Aussie sports market, what then? Take on the world, I think not.

Soccer securing a greater share of the Aussie sports market, now that's realistic.

Ralph Barba
(Producer of the Four Diegos Radio Show)
• This is a copy of the letter sent to 3AW

LET OUR SOCCER'S MARKET FORCES HAVE THEIR WAY

I am writing to give you my thoughts on Les Murray's article (page 5 of issue dated 19 Jan 1999) about the potential harm to Australian Soccer, if Sydney United folds.

In that article, Les (who is a man I highly respect) talks about all of the Aussie internationals produced by Sydney United and Melbourne Knights, and what future lies ahead for other kids of Coation heritage if there is no club for them to play in?

The question that comes to my mind, is where

LETTER TO EDITOR

have all of the kids from Anglo-Saxon heritage had to go over the last 30 years?

Sure, the Croatian backed clubs have produced a line of top players, and even if they fold as a National League club, surely they could continue to operate as a state or Superleague outfit!

The kids of Croatian background would still be able to go to the club their parents dream of as being part of

Croatia itself. I actually think, after having worked and lived with migrants of all backgrounds, that absence makes the heart grow fonder, and the longer people live here, the better the old home land becomes.

Back to football. If Sydney United can't continue to operate at all, then kids of Croatian background will continue to play soccer, and if good enough will end up at another club. They will have to integrate into the broader community.

Is that a bad thing? I think not. There will always be somewhere for people to go who want to do anything in this country.

I have mixed feelings about the Sydney United (SU) situation. On one hand, it is a real shame to see the club lurching towards sinking. On the other hand, there are too many un-Australian and unappealing features about going to their home games.

From my experience, they have a core group of "problem child" supporters that are probably the worst behaved I have seen in Sydney. Flares, threats of riots (chanting "there's going to be a riot") when security was forced to move in, shocking language (from adults as well!) and of course, the Cro — a-zia chant around the ground.

To me, the Perth Glories and Northern Spirits of

the world are the way to go. Look what Spirit have done in a short period of time, without necessarily being successful on the park. Why?

Because they have given Sydney supporters, the most hard to please supporters, a club that they can identify with!

I respect David Mitchell — he must be a top coach to have achieved what he has over the last two years. It would not surprise me if in fact the SU supporters no longer identify with the team themselves, now that the mix of players, names and backgrounds of playing personnel have changed dramatically since the grand final appearance two years ago.

That is, hardly any with Croatian backgrounds, relative to two years ago.

Back to Aussie kids. Les talks about the potential disaster to Aussie soccer if the Croatian pipeline closes.

Sure, this would be bad. But think of the thousands of Aussie kids of Anglo-Saxon background, who have NEVER had a link to a National League club in Sydney or the Bush!

Don't tell me that there has not been an untold wealth of talent out there not tapped into — because there has — for decades! Maybe if more clubs like Northern Spirit become a part of the

national scene (particularly if a Parramatta team can generate/replicate Northern Spirit) then kids will have a team they can identify with, and aspire to play with.

The mix of names and backgrounds will be slightly different, but the talent will still flow.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to get this off my chest! I would love to hear your views.

Remember, I'm not anti-Croatian or anything. I am pro-Australian (no matter what background people have, and have a right to be proud of their background), and pro-Aussie soccer. The Socceroos have been Aussie soccer's advertisement for years, but to be successful in Oz, soccer needs a legitimate, strong and well supported National League.

Now lets get on with it and let market forces have their way.

Harry Ross

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U/14s Mondays 6pm

U/15s Wednesdays 6pm

U/16s Thursday 6.30pm

Australian Features

PATIKAS' SUCCESSFUL COACHING START

By Soccer Weekly

The Jimmy Patikas-coached Sydney Magic has won the national 10 year olds' indoor 'Futsal' soccer championship at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra.

Sponsored by the Marrickville Indoor Sports & Leisure Centre and Chappis Sports Marketing, the team did as well as other Sydney Magic teams, with the 16 boys making the semis before losing to the eventual winner and having four players chosen to attend the Futsal Centre of Excellence in Brazil.

The men made it to the quarter-finals with one chosen for Australia's World Cup side and the women just missed out on the finals.

To take out the national title the 10 year boys had to play six games over two days in very hot conditions. They won the final 5-1.

Some of the boys have been playing together from the age of five and they formed the core of the Canterbury Junior Soccer Club team which was last season's undefeated Canterbury district champions and indoor Southern Region champions.

This year the boys will be playing outdoor for Canterbury-Marrickville Olympic in the NSW Soccer Federation's new cadet league against NSW Super League and NSL clubs such as Marconi and Sydney United.



Jim Patikas ... the much-loved Soccerroo has begun his coaching career with a bang.

The boys' indoor and outdoor coach is one of Australia's all-time greats, former Soccerroo, AEK Athens and Sydney Olympic professional, Jimmy Patikas. The team is managed by Con Lagos.

"These boys have a lot of talent, but it was just as



Magical performance ... Sydney Magic U/10s coached by Jim Patikas pictured here in Canberra. Top row L to R: Fouad Esber, Matthew Boyc, Aari Patikas, Bottom row L to R: Reuben Lagos, Callum Sinclair, Jeffrey Azzi, Jonnie Brown.

MIGRANT CLUBS' MYOPIC VIEW PAVES WAY FOR NSL REVOLUTION

By Les Murray

So soon after the alarm bells were sounded over the future of Sydney United came last week's bombshell that the Adelaide Sharks are in turmoil and there is some credible skepticism about their future.

On the same night on SBS' On The Ball program the news broke that the Carlton team was being sold to a new consortium which will re-launch the franchise under a new team and at a new venue next season.

Earlier last month came the announcement that another new consortium was formed in Sydney's west and it, too, will apply for an NSL franchise in the 1999-2000 season.

These are changing times in Australian soccer. And the changes are signalling some, in historical terms, dumbfounding realities.

Is this the beginning of the end of soccer as we have known it for the past 40 years? When clubs with migrant followings formed the game's identity and when, in order to attract more than a few hundred straggling passers by, you had to have an ethnic following.

These signals are being loudly trumpeted by the popular successes of Perth Glory and Northern Spirit which, in turn, are inspiring some wide entrepreneurial thinking and the birth of new franchises.

Perth Glory was the experiment and established the hypothesis. Now Northern Spirit has established the proof: (a) you do not need to have an ethnic following (any more) in order to attract a crowd and (b) there IS a soccer market in mainstream, non-migrant specific Australia.

For 40 years clubs with ethnic foundations and followings lived comfortably, and in some cases arrogantly, in the belief that they will always be safe, even prosperous, because their migrant communities would always follow them.

They watched as attempts to compete by 'district' clubs ended in failure after failure. The Blacktowns, Western Suburbs, Mooroolbarks and the rest are either dead or have retreated into the obscurity of state leagues.

Sadly now the ethnic clubs, who have pioneered the modern game in this country and brought massive benefits to our soccer culture, are tasting the consequences of social change and their own lack of vision. They are dying.

And what will replace them will be commercially bent franchises, units of the big soccer corporation only concerned with a business agenda: profile, positioning and profit, caring not a hoot about the culture, language, race or political ideology of their following.

The ethnic clubs will now look back, regretting the mistakes they made, that they didn't try to expand on their migrant followings at a time when people around them called desperately for them to do so. As Spirit chairman Remo Nogarotto said, also on On The Ball, "Aiming to attract only one narrow section of the market seems not very good business."

But now it's too late. They have no credibility with the wider public. Those fans who now watch the Glory and the Spirit have run out of patience. They never felt wanted before and now they do.

The clubs founded on migration really should have seen the light.

Migrants, after a time, assimilate and lose the need and the passion to mix with their own. They lose the need to go to soccer matches where they can be with each other and find a common focus. To sustain a migrant following you need a constant stream of new migrants. But Australia's migration program is now down to a mere trickle.



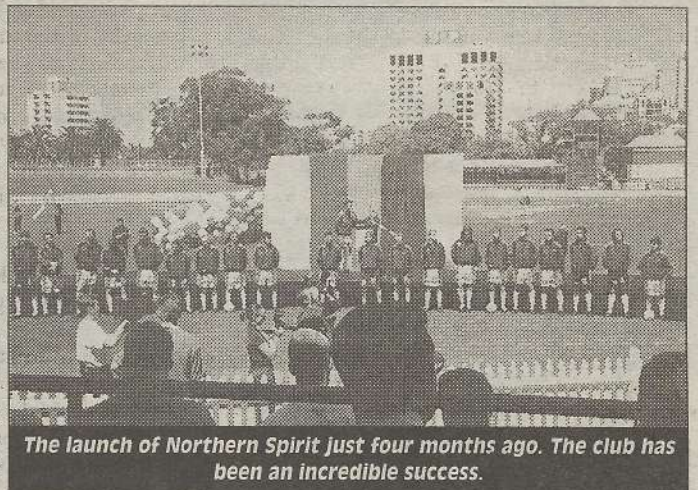
Perth Glory ... a club fully backed by the broader West Australian community.

What we will now see is new franchises springing up everywhere like bunches of kikuyu grass, each of them wanting a piece of the action and most will get it. In a few short years, the NSL will be entirely made up of this new breed. It will be the somewhat like the Japanese J League or the American MSL, brought into being not by design but by natural evolution.

The clubs they will replace will die, some faster than others. Their mementoes will be plaques erected in their honour in community halls.

Some will live on as State league or amateur clubs, playing in stadiums built with unselfish passion for a more extravagant future, with a handful of ageing fans and their grandchildren, out of sentimental duty, watching them.

The saddest part will be that the new clubs, soccer's



The launch of Northern Spirit just four months ago. The club has been an incredible success.

new era, will make hay from the foundations these clubs have made.

And soon nobody will remember them.
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much their courage and commitment that won through in the end and they deserve all the credit for a great victory," said Jimmy.

"They played the quarter-final, semi-final and final in the space of just two hours because of delays on our side of the draw. They looked completely exhausted before the final but they came out with such energy and commitment I was amazed.

"Apart from winning the title the boys and their families had a great time away and we couldn't ask for a better start to new year."

Futsal is the global name for indoor five-a-side soccer, based it being football played indoors in a 'salon'.

It is hugely popular around the world, particularly in Brazil where it is the primary breeding ground for outdoor because it develops exceptional ball skills.

And it is wonderful to see such a great Soccerroo, and gentleman, such as Jim Patikas becoming involved in the game again.

Surely any club in Australia would love to have Patikas' wisdom, knowledge and inspiration to call on. Jim, it's great to have you back in the game.

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Australian Features

IT'S AS EASY AS ABC FOR BIG AL!



Our first Guest of the Week is the former hard-nosed Socceroo and Ericsson Cup defender who has this season exchanged his well worn jock strap for a place on the ABC TV Big Match soccer commentary team.

Please a big Four Diegos Soccer Weekly welcome to former Socceroo and Ericsson Cup Premiership winner... Alan Hunter.

Diegos: "You were a hard man as a player, uncompromising in the tackle, always nipping away at the heels of smart alec pretty boy strikers. When you got the gig with ABC TV, did you have to think

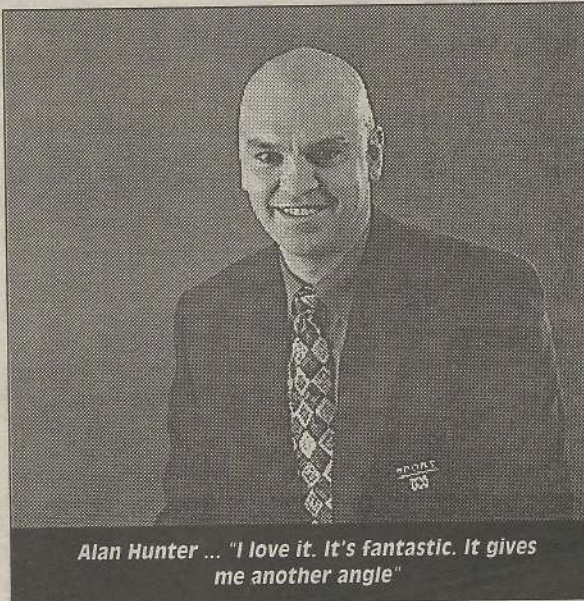
about what sort of special comments man you were going to be? Was it going to be the Jessie 'The Body' Ventura angry special comments man or the Dalai Lama 'Everyone is Beautiful' special comments man?"

Hunter: "It's probably a combination of all the above but certainly I'm trying to become the Alan Hunter special comments man. I try to be myself as much as I can and enjoy the game from the other side of the fence. I try to be as positive as I can and point out the highlights of the game. You certainly can't lie about it, you've got to call it as you see it but I try to relay a little more information and create a good rapport with the players, coaches and referees. Hopefully I can be regarded as an appropriate ambassador for the game by the spectators and fans."

Diegos: "How much preparation do you put in before a match?"

Hunter: "Probably a lot more than I did than when I was player. I always trained as much as I had to but I was never one of those players you'd see dashing off to the gym or doing a few more kilometres after a loss. I was lucky to be born a gifted soccer player. Hopefully I'm a gifted commentator because I started commenting way before I finished playing the game, it seems quite a natural thing for me to do."

Diegos: "The trend in televised sport is definitely to get as close to the sweat and spit of the action as possible, hence the emergence of the sidelines



Alan Hunter... "I love it. It's fantastic. It gives me another angle"

reporter. The AFL has 'Dipper', the Mardi Gra has John Michael Howsen, and the Gulf War had CNN's Peter Arnott. ABC TV has you and Robbie Wheatley. What's it like to be in amongst it all, having your finger on the pulse of seething throngs like the Perth Glory and the Northern Spirit supporters?"

Hunter: "I love it. It's fantastic. It gives me another angle, and more experience. You get a different aspect of the game because you have the crowd behind you and you also have the coaches' boxes nearby. It can be all very strange especially when you're trying to concentrate on the action for the full 90 minutes. At times it can also be a quite funny. I did the Olyroo v China game a few weeks ago. I was actually sitting on the Olyroo bench doing my side-line report and within the first couple of minutes of the game commencing I was asked a curly question about a particular Olyroo player who happen to be sitting next to me at the time. I sort of had to do a whispering Ted Lowe billiards impersonation. I hope I got away with it. Fortunately the player saw the funny side of it and still shook my hand after the game."

Diegos: "With respect to the greatest sports callers of our time such as Martin Tyler, Richie Benaud, Darrel Eastlake and Roy and HG, the Four Diegos admit that they favour the Brazilian soccer commentators. Do you ever feel like unleashing a scream that lasts 45 seconds when a team scores a goal and if you do, can you let one go when Canberra scores next?"

Hunter: "I don't think that anyone would be capable of the commentator's scream that would do justice to Canberra if they score a goal, to be honest. I just don't possess that rolling tongue thing. I would rather leave that to the main callers of this world. I'll let them get excited about the smaller things."

Diegos: "The Four Diegos asked our listeners and the readers of Australian Soccer Weekly to register their protest vote with Channel 7 over their paltry TV coverage of the Ericsson Cup. You're in the know, you're now one of them, who is to blame, who do we E-mail next and will it get better?"

Hunter: "It can only get better. How can't it get better? As you know we have the greatest game in the world. I know I sound like a broken record but I reckon you've got to blame someone really powerful like Sepp Blatter. He may somehow feel responsible and do something about it. A positive out of all this is that more people are watching soccer this year than ever before. Some journalist will say that this is only because of the crowds that Northern Spirit and Perth Glory are pulling but I prefer to think positively and say that we may just be making inroads into the Australian sports market. The crowd figures are up around the 600,000 mark already and they can only get better."

Diegos: "Great men have left their mark on human kind with some memorable quotes."

JFK: "Ask not what your country can do for you but instead, what you can do for your country"

Martin Luther King: "I have a dream brother and sisters."

And of course, **The Four Diegos:** "When the fish stinks it stinks from the head"

In your short time in soccer commentating, you've come out with some beauties. On one occasion when Perth played Northern Spirit earlier this season, you said, 'Usually it takes two to tango but with John Markovski it takes three.'

It was a classic, is it something you work on?"

Hunter: "That's just something that I pulled from personal experience. John and I used to tango every night down at Optus Oval when I was at Carlton. I've had to mark the big guy in the past and I think that he is the only player in Australian soccer history that was able to bounce me

off the ball. I have always been capable of coming out with a silly or a humorous comment and I think it's something that needs to be done to create a little bit of atmosphere and bring a bit of colour to the game."



Alan Hunter... "I always thought as a player, the media were people that you had to use to your advantage."

Diegos: "When former players make the transition from playing to working in the media, most of their soccer playing mates become distrustful because they now see them as a voracious, evil, scoophunting media devil."

When you were a player, what did you think of the media and how do your former playing colleagues relate to you now that you're the man with the microphone?"

Hunter: "I always thought as a player, the media were people that you had to use to your advantage. You didn't have to like them. I had that sort of attitude when I was a player. I didn't particularly care if anyone didn't like me, I was there to do a job and win the game. I suppose nothing has really changed."

Diegos: "Thanks Alan. A recent news flash on the Four Diegos fax announced that former WWF wrestler, Jessie 'The Body' Ventura has been elected the governor of Minnesota. Perhaps Australians will take to this style of soccer calling. Have a think about it. Adios Amigo!"

Hunter: "Thanks Diegos. Vote I for Big Al. Hmm... it has a ring to it. Adios Amigos!"

BACK PAIN

By Dr Peter Mitrevski

All of us tend to neglect our backs until one day, when we least expect it, we cry out, "Oh, my aching back! Why me?"

OUR KNACK FOR BAD BACKS

It is estimated that 8 out of 10 people will have a back problem at some time in their lives. And no wonder we have a knack for neglecting our backs!

'Weekend athletes' who strain underused muscles,

people with poor posture, and those who lift incorrectly, or who are overweight, under stress, or out of shape are setting the stage for back injury.

The muscles and joints that support our backs often lack strength and flexibility, making it difficult to keep our backs in balance.

HOW EXERCISE HELPS

Back exercise helps strengthen and increase flexibility in the muscles and joints that support your back. It takes just 15 minutes, 3-5 times a week, to condition the muscles that keep your back healthy and balanced.

Whether it comes as the sharp pain of a sudden injury, an occasional twinge, or a constant daily ache, back pain can interfere with your life.

Common causes of lower back pain

- *Disc problems
- *Poor lifting techniques
- *Osteoarthritis
- *Over-eating
- *Tension and emotional problems
- *Smoking
- *Prolonged driving

WHAT TO DO

Your medical doctor or chiropractor can best help with your back problem if the cause of your backache is diagnosed and treated early.

Accurate diagnosis requires a complete medical history, physical examination and sometimes imaging studies like x-rays, CT scans or MRI's.

Management of back problems may include:

- *Medication
- *Rest
- *Soft tissue/massage
- *Mobilisation
- *Manipulation
- *Heat or ice application
- *Ultrasound or interferential
- *Home exercise programs
- *Swimming
- *Stretching
- *Postural training

Although your doctor can guide you on the road to recovery, a healthy, pain-free back is almost always up to you.



Dr Mitrevski with Nigeria's Olympic team goalkeeper, Emmanuel Babayaro

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Australian Features

THE LAW ACCORDING TO DAVID ZDRILIC

The Four Diegos continue their VW Combi Van tour of the World by dropping in on Soccerroo and SSV Ulm striker, David Zdrilic.

Our second Guest of the Week this week is another product of the Sydney United assembly line of young champions who have gone on to make a mark on the world scene.

Under Terry Venables he became a Soccerroo and currently he is leading the goal scoring charts in the German second division.

Please, a big Four Diego and Soccer Weekly welcome to former Law student, Soccerroo and SSV Ulm goal scoring ace ... David Zdrilic.

Diegos: "From all reports you seem to be the toast of the 'Sauerkraut and Carlsberg beer' set in Germany at present, impressing all and sundry, with your goal-scoring exploits. The Four Diegos satellite dish does not pick up many SSV Ulm games, so can you tell us about the club and how your season has gone so far?"

Zdrilic: "SSV Ulm is a big sporting club. It's not just a football club. It has basketball, volleyball, and tennis teams associated with it. The football team has really picked up this season because of the way that we have played. We went 16 games unbeaten — a new record for first and second divisions in Germany. I've scored eight goals in 15 games and the whole team has been playing well, so we are on a bit of a high right now. I'm not sure whether we will be promoted to the German Bundesliga though. We haven't got the financial resources of some of the big clubs that have been relegated from the first division but we have an exceptional trainer, so anything can happen."

Diegos: "A former Diego 'Guest of the Week', Frank Juric, who is the goalkeeper for Fortuna Dusseldorf, also plays in the German second division. When you clash in competition does it bring back memories of the old Sydney United and Melbourne Knights rivalry, and if you do slam one past him will you go up and give him a hug and a kiss or just a good aussie rasberry?"

Zdrilic: "We have actually met once on the field but I didn't score against him. I'm sure, if we meet again and I put one away, I'll let him know about it. I think I'll remind him of the good old days downunder. I'm sure, if he saves one of my shots he'll have a few words to say. Hopefully next time I can put one past him so I can give him a bit of cheek."

Diegos: "Your old club, Sydney United is presently in the hands of a receiver and desperately trying to service. Its long-term future seems to be in doubt. How does it make you feel when the club you grew up at, is struggling to survive?"

Zdrilic: "Sydney United is not only a team that I played for but also a club I used to support as a kid. The problem has always been with the management and the way they handle things. The players have always had problems with the management. I feel sorry that the club is in trouble due to poor administration because there are a lot of good people who have always wanted to help the club. Unfortunately, it was something that I could see coming. I hope that someone comes along and bails them out but things don't look good."

Diegos: "You got your chance to play for the Soccerroos under Terry Venables at the beginning of his reign as Aussie coach. You didn't figure in his plans against Iran but it is well documented that he rated you highly as a player of the future. What are your thoughts on El Tel and do you still have a strong desire to play for Australia?"

Zdrilic: "Terry did rate me pretty highly, but back then, I didn't really know why. When I first played for Australia, I didn't think that I was ready. I didn't think that I was good enough to play at that level but he blooded me and gave me a chance."

"Now that I'm playing in Europe, I feel that I've developed as a player and learnt quickly about the qualities you need to survive as a professional overseas. One big desire I have, is to play for the Soccerroos again. This time though, when I do play, I want to make sure that I make an impact so that people really see a difference. It was very easy to play under Venables."

"The instructions he gave me and the systems the team played were simple to follow and understandable. It's a shame that he has gone because he was a great coach and he wasn't to blame for our failure. The main reason for our failure was our lack of experience in playing good teams in important matches."

We've got to learn how to handle the pressure better."

Diegos: "A recent news flash on the Four Diegos fax, announced that the German fourth division club, Bonn S.C., in its quest to get promoted, has signed up the whole of the Cuban national team."

"It must get lonely for you over in Germany. Do you sometimes wish that your club would sign a team full of aussies to keep you company?"

Zdrilic: "That would be ideal if it could be done. But you've got to learn the hard way sometimes and if you do, in the end, I believe, you'll be a better player for it. I did hear about the Cubans coming and I thought it was pretty funny. I just wonder how their club will field a team when they are all called up for national duty."

Diegos: "Former Liverpool Aussie star, Craig Johnston, once said that he didn't take up an offer to play in Germany because the players had to train with weights strapped to their legs. What is the training like, and do you think that after a couple of years of playing in Germany that you can perhaps, turn your hand to weightlifting and wear the Green and Gold in another sport?"

Zdrilic: "You can't help but bulk up playing in Germany. The training consists of endless running, sometimes in one-hour intervals after one hour of match play. They take blood tests to calculate how fast you

should be running and what physical aspect of your play you should be concentrating on. This sort of training is very intense but the positive thing is that it can only improve us as players and eventually improve our national team. It's exciting when you see yourself improving as a player."

Hopefully I can keep it going."

Diegos: "Aussies are the flavour of the month on the world scene at present. You are scoring regularly and no doubt, attracting attention from other clubs. What does your future hold?"

Zdrilic: "I believe there is a big future for me here. There has been a lot of interest expressed by Bundesliga clubs. German soccer really suits me. I hope to played in the top league here for a few years and then hopefully crossover to play in England. That is my dream and I hope I achieve it."

Diegos: "Thanks David. Some free Four Diegos advice, watch out for that 'Sauerkraut and Carlsberg beer' scene. The 'Tequila and Enchilada' scene ruined our

million-dollar soccer career, and forced us to move into the media. We don't wish that career path on anybody. Adios Amigo."

Zdrilic: "Thanks for the advice Diegos. When you tune up your satellite dish, I'll blow you a kiss and give you a wave. Adios Amigos."

"The Four Diegos' are radio celebrities and soccer scribes on Melbourne's Stereo 97.4 FM Saturday 10 am — 12 midday."

E-Mail 'The Diegos' on FourDiegos@bigpond.com

Until next time
.....Adios Amigos!



SYDNEY OLYMPIC GOES SAMBA CRAZY!



The Four Diegos' Samba Soccer ethos is really taking hold around Australia. UTS Sydney Olympic added colour and life to their Spirit home game with their own Samba dancers. Ole!



VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

NEW BOYS START OFF WITH A WIN

ALTONA EAST 2 SUNSHINE GEORGIES 1

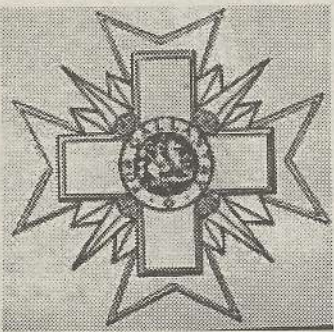
By Soccer Weekly

Premier League new boys Altona East got off to winning start on Sunday, defeating Sunshine Georgies 2-1 at Paisley Park.

Altona were 0-1 down at half time but second half goals from Nick Papadopoulos and Steven Bartol enabled them to register their first three points.

Georgies' Darko Stojilkovski gave his team the lead when he scored after 32 minutes.

Papadopoulos then scored from the spot after referee Dominic Barba had adjudged that Joe Debono had committed an offence.



Referee Barba was the centre of attention after handing out seven yellow cards to Altona players, and three to Sunshine players.

Papadopoulos received a second yellow card in the 79th minute to put a little dampener on what had been a great first up effort from Altona East.

Altona East: Charalambous, Salpingis, De Amicis, Donnelly, Kapulica, Xydias, Groidis, Bartol, Papadopoulos, Angelos, Verikakis. Subs: Kappadai, Mallinarias, Gerondoudas, Grech.

Georgies: Wardle, Rozanitis, Bot, Scicluna, Debono, Kindtner, Recchia, Hermosilla, Opazo, Vera, Stojilkovski. Subs: Elvin, Cassar, Monitto.

Referee: Dominic Barba
Votes: 3- Kindtner (SG), 2- Bartol (AE), 1- Donnelly (AE)

PRESTON BEATS OFFSIDE TRAP AND EAGLES

PRESTON LIONS 2 SPRINGVALE WHITE EAGLES 0

By Milan Ninovic

Preston Lions triumphed in their opening game of the season, defeating Springvale White Eagles 2-1 at Goodyear Stadium on Sunday.

New signing Warren Spink got the first goal for Preston right on half time.

The White Eagles offside trap had failed badly and Orhan Katouik delivered a cross for Spink to get in behind the sleepy White Eagles defence and head past goalkeeper Robert Brian.

Spink then had to be sacrificed to make way for substitute



'keeper Chris Tenuta after Lupce Acevski had been sent off in the 74th minute.

Referee Rick Arturi dismissed Acevski after pulling down White Eagles' Ninoslav Bezbradica outside the penalty area.

Another poor offside trap led to the White Eagles conceding a second goal ten minutes before time.

Kosta Smirnis went through before planting a shot into the bottom corner.

Lions: Acevski (sent off), Slavevski, Kovacic, Lisolajski (Smirnis), Filipovski, Ogenovski, Ujgunovski, Katouik (Simsek), Spink (Tenuta), Burlak, Emovski.

White Eagles: Brian, Calomino, Armour, Culibrk, Milenkovic (Bezbradica), Nikolic, Mlinar, Rikanovic, Gacovski, Cvetkovski (Marinkovic), Styczen.

Referee: Rick Arturi
Votes: 3- Ujgunovski (PL), 2- Styczen (SWE), 1- Spink (PL)

ST ALBANS GET A DOSE OF THE BLUES

FAWKNER BLUES 4 ST ALBANS SAINTS 1

By Daniella Raco

Fawkner Blues came away with all the points after an impressive display in defeating St Albans Saints in their season opener at Smith Reserve on Sunday night.

On the field, a solid Blues outfit just about deserved their win.

The Blues intentions of grabbing the three points was evident from the outset. They outclassed the Saints, taking the lead six minutes into the game thanks to an effortless finish by Paul Ferrante.

Inspired by playmaker Ivan Duzel, Fawkner scored their second goal in the 12th minute in what seemed a messy goalmouth scramble.

Duzel's effort to score a second goal was denied by Saints 'keeper Ivan Tomic's reflex save from a long range shot.

Harry Karl, back from Melbourne Knights, appeared to keep the visitors in the game, scoring in the 28th minute.

However, the reply came in the 39th minute with a shot from Marco Di Sauro to make it 3-1 for Fawkner.

The second half saw both sides down to nine men. Kon Sianidis and Karl were both sent off for the Saints whilst Fawkner duo Enzo De Santis and Santo Emmanuele both received red cards from referee Hakan Anaz.



Harry Karl ... new signing for Saints.

The dismissal of these players should have calmed things down but a spiteful few minutes saw several players deservedly booked.

Tamer Simsek put the home side further ahead in the 75th minute.

St Albans too, created some opportunities in the second half but perhaps a lack of communication and numerous changes on the field failed to produce any real threat.

Blues: Gonzalez, Tramontana, Grimaud, P.Ferrante, Schipano, V.Ferrante, Simsek, De Santis (sent off), Emmanuele (sent off), Duzel (Sterjovski), Di Sauro (Collins).

Saints: Tomic, Clarica, Vojtek (Vidakovic), Razov, Raspudic, Colina, Karl (sent off), Dragicevic (Bacak), Sianidis (sent off), S.Rados, Kozic.

Referee: Hakan Anaz
Votes: 3- Simsek (FB), 2- Duzel (FB), 1- Karl (StA)

BENTLEIGH PUT FIVE PAST MAGIC

BENTLEIGH GREENS 5 ALTONA MAGIC 0

By Patrick Tomson

A fairytale beginning saw Bentleigh Greens trounce a lacklustre Altona Magic side 5-0 at the newly upgraded Kingston Heath Reserve on Sunday.

An entourage of dignitaries along with an estimated 1,750 spectators witnessed the official opening of the new building, followed by an emphatic first half performance highlighted by four goals from the home team.

A sterling first half performance by Bentleigh's new signing, David Grella, started the whitewash with a darting run through midfield and, after combing with Harry Micheil, left Juan Nilo with an easy finish in the 26th minute.

Soon after, Tom Karapatsos made a penetrating run down the right hand flank and whipped in a low cross which was met superbly by George Lenetis to slot away Bentleigh's second.

The best goal of the game came in the 39th minute when David Grella out paced Altona's Simon Micevski and Tom Markovski to finish a superb solo effort that would have made Michael Owen proud.

Unfortunately for Altona's keeper Darren McGrath, two minutes later a deflected shot found the feet of Nilo who put away his second goal of the match.

The second half proved to be a tighter contest, with Altona creating several scoring opportunities. Early shots in the half by Johnny Sapazovski and Henry Velkovski tested Bentleigh's 'keeper Glenn Clarke who rose to the challenge.

The final stages of the game belonged to Bentleigh with several shots narrowly missing the target.

The goal which sealed Altona's fate came in the 86th minute when substitute dashed past his defender and knocked in a low cross that was parried by McGrath out to Cameron Pino whose shot was deflected into the path of George Kalimeris who calmly put the ball into the back of the net.

Greens: Clarke, Karapatsos (Kotsovolos), Micheil (Kalimeris), McDonagh, Constantinou, Drakos, Kourkoutzelos, Lenetis (Papettas), Pino, Nilo, Grella.

Magic: McGrath, Todevski (Hrehoresin), Bogdanovski, Bizimovski, Micevski, T.Markovski, Sapazovski, Velkovski, Bozinovski (S.Markovski), Petrevski, Cergovski (Mickovski).

Referee: Gerry Connolly
Votes: 3- Grella (BG), 2- Nilo (BG), 1- Pino (BG)

TWO SENT OFF AS PORT PUTS SIX PAST DEPLETED WESTVALE

PORT MELBOURNE 6 WESTVALE 1

By John Rigas

Port Melbourne Sharks handed out a soccer lesson to Premier League newcomers Westvale at Anderson Reserve on Sunday, defeating them 6-1.

Westvale had two players sent off in their debut game. Dennis Bergam was the first to be given his marching orders by referee Robert Ince for a two-footed tackle on Tom Sonsini in the 29th minute.

Goalkeeper Robert Acteson followed suit in the 70th minute after a foul on Peter Kakos.

Port's new signings George Tzirtis and Kakos combined to give the Sharks the lead when Kakos headed in Tzirtis' far post cross.

Kakos then supplied captain Nick Tsaltas who was unmarked at the far post to double the lead in the 37th minute.

The Sharks scored two goal in as many minutes:

Substitute Jim Latinopoulos let fly with a 30 metre shot that dipped into the top corner and then another substitute, Kosta Caimakamis, scored from the panty spot in the 81st minute after Kakos had been fouled.

Westvale striker Angie Goutzioulis scored a consolation three minutes from time with a strike from close range.

Just a minute after that Port midfielder John Pappas scored his team's fifth goal from 35 metres.

Kakos found time for his second of the match right at the death when he easily tapped in a cross at the far post.

Sharks: Cooper, Knezevic, Pappas, Sonsini, Vargas, Heath, Kakos, Tzirtis (Palatsides), Palamaras (Caimakamis), Tsaltas, Fak (Latinopoulos).

Westvale: Acteson (sent off), Pender, Brown, McAleer (Marinkovic), Sevin (Karkaletsis), Bergam (sent off), Stubbins, Timotheou (Myers), Armstrong, Goutzioulis, Geri.

Referee: Robert Ince
Votes: 3- Kakos (PM), 2- Knezevic (PM), 1- Heath (PM)



'EAT WELL LIVE WELL PREMIER LEAGUE RESULTS

ROUND 1

Fawkner Blues 4 - St Albans Saints 1
Bentleigh Greens 5 - Altona Magic 0
Altona East 2 - Sunshine Georgies 1
Preston Lions 2 - Springvale White Eagles 0
Port Melbourne Sharks 6 - Westvale 1

ROUND 2 FIXTURES

Saturday February 6

Altona Magic v Altona East - kick off 7pm - Paisley Park
South Dandneong v Green Gully Cavaliers - kick off 6pm - George Andrews Reserve

Sunday February 7

Springvale White Eagles v Port Melbourne Sharks - kick off 6pm - Serbian Sports Centre
Sunshine Georgies v Preston Lions - kick off 6pm - Chaplin Reserve
St Albans Saints v Bentleigh Greens - kick off 6pm - Churchill Reserve
Melbourne Raiders v Fawkner Blues - kick off 6pm - Partridge Reserve

Monday February 8

Westvale v Bulleen Inter Kings - kick off 8.15pm - Green Gully Reserve

Australian Features

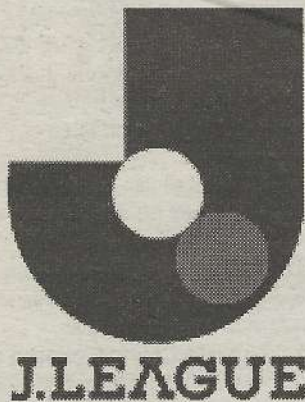
THOMSON ENJOYING J-LEAGUE AT HIROSHIMA

By John Economos

Eddie Thomson former Australian World Cup coach and briefly back in Australia for a short holiday, left Sydney last Saturday to return immediately to Japan to start his pre-season training for his J-League team Sanfrecce-Hiroshima.

But this time Big Eddie is taking with him to Japan his close pal Mickey Hickman, the only man to have heroically, and against all odds, won a National championship (1990) for turbulent Sydney Olympic.

The hard working Hickman for the past six years has been under contract in England serving Reading then Leicester City and last year with Wolverhampton. 'Hickey' will now fill the role as Thomson's assistant at Hiroshima, following Tommy Sermanni's return to takeover the coaching reins of the Canberra Cosmos.



Just prior to his departure last week-end, Soccer Weekly was able to catch up with Thomson for a brief update and chat on his life over in Hiroshima.

"Of course I miss Australia. I came back to grab some Aussie sun and to relax away from Soccer up at Noosa during the J-League's off-season.

"But I'll be back in Australia — Adelaide in fact — on Monday February 15th with my Japanese team Sanfrecce for a few days in a pre-season training camp.

"We did this last year and all worked out fine," Thomson reported.

The now 52 year old Thomson was again enticed to sign up with the Club at Hiroshima. This time however he agreed to just one more year instead of the two year deal he had signed with his initial contract. His latest contract expires in December 1999.

Since arriving in Japan two years ago, Thomson took over Sanfrecce who had just finished second last in a J-League of 16 clubs.

In his first season in command of Sanfrecce-Hiroshima Thomson finished in 14th spot in a now expanded J-League of 18 clubs.

Last season Thomson further lifted Sanfrecce into ninth spot and was even able to make the semis in the cash-rich Emperor's Cup where his side was edged out by one of the giant clubs.

Thomson, who took over the coaching reins from Frank Arok over Australia's National and Olympic Games squads in 1991, told us: "I have been left with very fond memories of coaching the two Australian national sides.

"Obviously my last two very tense World Cup qualifying matches with Australia against Maradona's Argentina in 1993 rate highly.

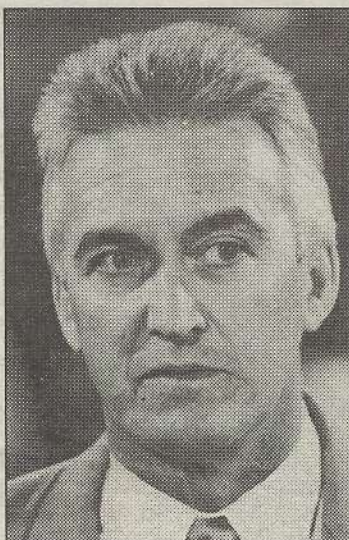
"But for me, I still believe beating Holland in the qualifiers in our final Olympic Games hurdle (for the Atlanta Games) in Holland, through Ned Zelic's two goals, have fantastic memories for me. That Holland side don't forget included the big names such as the De Boer twins, Kulivert and Numan playing for them."

Thomson holds training sessions everyday with double sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

"I have 26 fulltime players under contract (including three Aussies Aurelio Vidmar, Tony Popovic and Hayden Foxe). At Sanfrecce we also have 22 Youth

team players in the Reserves (under 20s) who attend college in the day and train of a night.

"I have two senior players that have made the Japan national team, another two are in Japan's Olympic team and another who has made it into Japan's Under 21s.



"Our major sponsor is still Mazda who pitch in US\$ 5 million a year to add to our overall US\$18 million annual budget. However don't be fooled by the huge financial figures as we are far from being the richest club in the J-League.

"The Japanese style of play is very fast and exciting with action from box to box, but instant panic creeps in near the edge of the boxes. The Japanese are very good players with very good technique, but Japan is not as yet a real Soccer nation mainly because the J-League has been going for just over five years.

"When I first arrived here I quickly had to revert them all back to basics and strongly teach the value of possession," explained Thomson.

As well as a lucrative contract, the Sanfrecce Club has given Thomson a luxurious apartment in the very heart of the modern city of Hiroshima, the city which was flattened by the A-Bomb in August 1944 during World War II.

All three Aussie players (Vidmar, Popovic and Foxe) have excellent contracts with the club which has virtually secured them for life.

One Australian player annually earns approximately eight times the money he was being paid by his former club back in Australia.

And what would Eddie Thomson's plans be after his latest current contract expires in December?

"You can understand for the moment I must say I don't honestly know," he answered.

Would the experienced Big Ed ever consider returning to coaching in Australia?

"You just never know what the future holds," ended Thomson.

NSW SUPER LEAGUE BEGINS THIS WEEKEND

By John Economos

The NSW Super League kicks off this weekend with Bonnyrigg's super-coach John Turner more than ready and able to shoot for further honours.

Last night the always jovial Turner, who last season easily took out the 'State's prestigious award of 'Coach Of The Year', stated to us: "We have done some solid preparation in the pre-season and have played four games winning three and drawing one.

"We even were able to beat a touring South Korean side 2-1. Last weekend we had a 1-1 hard work out with the Leichhardt Tigers."

Since last season when he ripped the title of Minor League Champions from the clutches of Blacktown City in the very last round by thrashing the Parramatta Eagles 4-1, Turner been able to retain most of his first grade squad.

"I've only had one injured player so far. He came up to me last week and said 'Coach I've got an injured calf'.

"I said to him well 'you better quickly go and see a Vet,' the witty Turner told us.

Bonnyrigg took out the Minor Championship with League 46 points, two ahead of Blacktown City by winning 14 matches and being held to four draws from 22 rounds.

"I've regained attacking midfielder Roman Nikolic who is back from Red Star, but I have lost to Macarthur Rams defender Graham Watton. However having said this I've signed from the Rams defensive midfielder Ben Green.

"In theory my players should be stronger and better this season having the benefit of being together from last year."

Turner who also guided Bonnyrigg to win the NSW Club Championship as well as piloting his first grade to the Grand Final against Blacktown City, rates at least three sides that will prove tough opponents for this season's Super League championship chase.

"I reckon Canterbury Marrickville, Macarthur Rams and Blacktown City will be strong this year," were Turner's picks.

Turner last season was denied from completing a clean sweep for Bonnyrigg when the White Eagles went down 1-0 to Blacktown in the Grand Final through a 'golden goal'.

Meanwhile the Leichhardt Tigers, again under the command of former Australian international centre-back Arno Bertogna,



Jim Nikas and John Buonavoglia ... last year's joint Super League players of the year. Who will it be this year?

have lost their most mobile flank-striker John Buonavoglia who at the end of last season was transferred to Lee Sterrey's Newcastle Breakers in the Ericsson Cup.

The Leichhardt Tigers however have signed 20 year old attacking midfielder David James from Division 2 side Hajduk Wanderers.

The Tigers who this weekend are at home at Lambert Park to host 1997 League champions the Parramatta Eagles, have also signed striker Chris Lansdowne from Camden Tigers as well as midfielder Fabio Macolino from relegated St George.

As well Bertogna has signed little known of, attacking midfielder Hassan Kdoub.

The coaching positions at Blacktown City and Eastern Suburbs have changed, with former international Alex Robertson and winner of the Grand Final last season, only last week walked out on Blacktown, whilst also former international Joe Watson has switched from Eastern Suburbs to takeover the reins of newly promoted side from the outer western suburbs, the Fairfield Bulls.

Not only has the NSW Super League brought forward their new season by three months this weekend, but next season's start will also be brought forward to kick off as early as in October to bring the Super League into line, or on collision course, with the Ericsson Cup.

NSW SOCCER FEDERATION SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND



ONE

Saturday 6th February

Bonnyrigg White Eagles vs Bankstown City Lions

Serbian Centre, 6:00pm

Macarthur Rams vs Central Coast

Lynwood Park, 7:00pm

Blacktown City Demons vs Eastern Suburbs

Gabbie Stadium, 6:00pm

Sunday 7th February

Ryde City vs Fairfield Bulls

Wentworth Park, 3:00pm

Leichhardt Tigers vs Parramatta Eagles

Lambert Park, 5:00pm

Canterbury Marrickville vs Sutherland Sharks

Henson Park, 6:00pm

NSW SOCCER FEDERATION INFORMATION SERVICE

0055 22885

(75c per min - IDS. Higher rates applies from mobile and public phones)

SOCCER WOMAN

WITH JANENE MAR IN CANBERRA

ANSETT AUSTRALIA SUMMER SERIES 1998/99

Round Seven

ECLIPSE STRETCH THEIR LEAD

CANBERRA ECLIPSE 1
(Angela Iannotta 79m)
SASI PIRATES 0

Canberra Eclipse stretched their lead to three points at the top of the Ansett Summer Series with their second 1-0 win over rival contenders SASI Pirates on Sunday at Ainslie Football Club in Canberra.

The six-points for the weekend makes Eclipse the first team to twice take the maximum points in a round, and to achieve this in consecutive weeks with three rounds (including a bye) remaining before the grandfinal sounds a warning to opposition teams.

An overall scrappy half saw chances created at both ends but poor finishing resulted in nil goals. The home side came closest in the sixth minute, midfielder Peita-Claire Hepperlin sending a delightful ball over the top for Cindy Doyle up the left flank.

Doyle then cut inside her marker and unleashed her shot from the left edge of the 18-yard which was tipped over the bar by Pirates' keeper Tracey Wheeler.

The second half was a bit livelier and again there was action on both goals. Six minutes after the break,

Eclipse's Sacha Wainwright worked a neat one-two with Doyle, and smacked her shot from 13 metres on the left which Wheeler saved well.

Wheeler was called upon to make several more saves and was the busier of the keepers as visitors SASI Pirates found it difficult to penetrate the sound Eclipse defence, resorting mainly to long range efforts.

Yet on the rare occasion the Pirates did break through, they had no joy.

In the 77th minute, striker Jessica Halfpenny cut her way well inside the box and was lining up her shot, before she appeared to be bundled down. As she lay tangled in a heap tangled up with Hepperlin, play was waved on and no foul given.

Canberra Eclipse finally broke the deadlock two minutes later, an unexpected but impressive strike from Angela Iannotta. Perched out on the right edge of the 18-yard box at an acute angle, Iannotta blasted the ball at goal. Wheeler went the right way but the power of the shot was too great.

The match ended with Wheeler saving at the feet of Eclipse substitute Dior Foxhill, and the Pirates with another long range attempt. In the end, the single goal was enough for the Canberra Eclipse to celebrate yet another win.

SAPPHIRES DROP VITAL POINTS

NORTHERN NSW HORIZON 1
(Shelley Youman 3m)
NSWIS SAPPHIRES 1
(Kelly Golebiowski 73m)

Second-placed NSWIS Sapphires slipped up in the points race on Sunday at Newcastle's Jack McLaughlin Oval, managing just a 1-1 draw against bottom-placed Northern NSW Horizon, despite Northern having two players sent from the field.

Northern welcomed back Alison Forman and Shelley Youman to the lineup after the pair served their one-match suspensions on the Saturday following send-offs in their last outing.

But they only traded places with playmaker Cheryl Salisbury, sitting out this game after receiving her third yellow card for the season on Saturday.

But it was the underdogs who took the lead after just three minutes. Kristy Palozzi made some space on the left and provided a pinpoint cross for Youman, which the Matilda drilled first-time under the goalkeeper from just inside the box.

Nine minutes later, Youman returned the favour, pumping in a cross for Palozzi whose effort flew just over the mark. Palozzi was unlucky soon after as her attempted chip again flew a touch too high.

The Sapphires then created an array of chances of their own, Joanne Peters, Kelly Golebiowski, Rhian Davies, and Julie Murray all coming away empty-handed.

Another succession of shots in the five minutes before half-time saw Amanda Parker's high shot saved, Murray's strike cleared off the line by Horizon defender Joanne Powell, and Anissa Tann-Darby's freekick clip the top of the crossbar.

In the 58th minute, Forman received a yellow card following a tangle with her opponent, her second for the game and therefore her marching orders.

The midfielder had been shown the first yellow in the 18th minute for dissent. The expulsion is Forman's second in just her third game, since her return to Australia from the Danish league.

But the drama was not over for Northern as they fought desperately to hang on to their slender lead. Ten minutes after Forman's exit, defender Joanne Powell was cautioned as she and teammate Tracie McGovern escorted a ball back for the keeper.

In the resultant freekick to the Sapphires, Powell broke the wall to watch as the yellow card once again was pulled from the referee's pocket, and she too was sent from the field. Horizon were down to nine players with 22 minutes still to play.

Then in the very next moment, McGovern charged at the Peters freekick, and copped the full force of the ball in the head. Knocked unconscious, the Horizon defender was stretchered off the field and taken to hospital.

It looked increasingly unlikely that Northern would hold the lead for much longer, and the inevitable happened soon after in the 73rd minute.

Sapphires' midfielder Murray chipped the ball forward and Golebiowski skilfully chested the ball down to control before slamming home with a clinical finish for the equaliser.

NSWIS peppered the goal in desperate search of a winner, yet their momentum and numerical advantage counted for nothing as Horizon scrapped and scrambled to deny the champions.

Keeper Perrett rose to the challenge in the pressure-cooker atmosphere and helped the underdogs to a share of the points.

CASA STRIKES AGAIN

CANBERRA ECLIPSE 1
(Lisa Casagrande 49)
SASI PIRATES 0

Canberra Eclipse emerged the deserved 1-0 victor in Saturday's top of the table clash against SASI Pirates.

A fast-paced contest between the two traditionally attack-minded teams saw the Eclipse gain the upper hand with several very close chances on goal in the first half. Canberra were a step faster than their opponent throughout and used the width of the pitch to their advantage.

Canberra's Sarah Cooper came close after 22 minutes but her strike from the right curled just wide of the far top corner. Two minutes later, Cindy Doyle turned inside her marker but blasted the shot over from 10 metres.

Unexpected rain then pelted down heavily for the remainder of the half. Lisa Casagrande beat the offside

trap in the 32nd minute, but her shot sailed just over. The Matilda attacker was again unlucky just before the break, her first-time effort from the right just given a touch too much air.

Four minutes into the second half, Canberra Eclipse took the lead through Series top goalscorer Casagrande. A miscued long ball forward from midfielder Nancy Foot sailed over her teammates and seemingly into the clutches of keeper Leanne Trimboli.

But the ball bounced awkwardly just in front of her, and unaware of Casagrande bearing in on her from the blind side, Trimboli calmly steadied to gather in the ball.

But Casagrande took full advantage of the conditions and slid in on the wet surface, stealing the ball from the goalie and simultaneously steering it goalwards.

In the 74th minute, a Sacha Wainwright 30 metre freekick almost doubled Canberra's lead, but it rocked the crossbar, and Casagrande's shot from the rebound was blocked by a defender.

The Pirates gained a little momentum in their bid for the equaliser, but their best chance saw unmarked striker Kristy Moore slip as she lined up for the shot.

SAPPHIRES V PIRATES ABANDONED

The Round 6 doubleheader between then frontrunners NSWIS Sapphires and SASI Pirates which was postponed following heavy Sydney rain will not be played.

AWSA handed down the decision last Friday that the games would be considered an abandoned fixture.

The two games have been treated as scoreless draws, and two points have been awarded to both sides.

The heavy Summer Series and international competition schedule does not allow for any shifting of dates in this World Cup year, and the matches would have been played midweek. Concerns were expressed that the playing of four matches in the space of five days was too great an expectation on the players themselves.

The allocation of points left the two teams on sixteen points each going in to Round 7, one point behind Canberra Eclipse.

THREE LATE GOALS SINK HORIZON

NSWIS SAPPHIRES 5
(Alicia Cavanagh 42m, Tracey Thomas 68m, Julie Murray 83, Amanda Parker 87m, Kelly Golebiowski 89m)
NORTHERN NSW HORIZON 2
(Cheryl Salisbury 12m, 81m)

NSWIS Sapphires moved into outright second spot, the favourites scoring three late goals to defeat the luckless Northern NSW Horizon 5-2 on Saturday.

The Sapphires had taken the field level with SASI Pirates in equal second place.

Northern Horizon midfielders Shelley Youman and Alison Forman watched the action from the grandstand, serving their one-match suspensions.

Yet it was the depleted Horizon who kicked off in an attacking mood and rewarded with the 12th minute goal. A Sunni Hughes cross from the right just eluded striker Kristy Palozzi, but Salisbury had the ball in her sights and met it with a brilliant diving header just outside the six yard area.

Five minutes later, Hughes was stretchered off, injuring her back after coming down heavily from a clash with the keeper.

Northern's woes continued as midfielder Jodie

Randall was sidelined with a knee injury just four minutes later.

Shortly before the break, the Sapphires grabbed the equaliser, Alicia Cavanagh successful in finishing a Kelly Golebiowski cross.

In the 68th minute, defender Tracey Thomas gave NSWIS the 2-1 lead, slotting home the loose ball amidst a goalmouth scramble.

But Northern were not finished and with nine minutes remaining, Salisbury scored her second for the equaliser. A Bronwyn Nutley cross found Salisbury who sent the ball under the keeper.

But NSW turned up the heat as if shocked into action. Two minutes later, Golebiowski provided the through ball for Murray to cleverly chip the keeper from the left edge of the 18-yard and regain the lead at 3-2.

Tracie McGovern then came close to an instant reply for the Horizon, almost converting a corner.

Another two minutes on, and Golebiowski sent Amanda Parker unchallenged toward goal, placing the ball past the keeper.

Substitute Parker had reason to celebrate, this her debut national league appearance. In the 89th minute, Golebiowski grabbed a goal for herself, Murray this time the provider, to give the visitors a 5-2 victory, the late surge of goals completely sinking any hopes of a Northern upset.

SUMMER IS... ERICSSON CUP

next round

Friday 5 February

Newcastle Breakers v Sydney Olympic
Breakers Stadium

Saturday 6 February

Brisbane Strikers v Northern Spirit
Suncorp Stadium

Gippsland Falcons v Carlton SC
Mobil Park

Sunday 7 February

South Melbourne v
Melbourne Knights

Bob Jane Stadium

Sydney United v Adelaide City
Edensor Park

Adelaide Sharks v Perth Glory

Hindmarsh Stadium

Monday 8 February

Canberra Cosmos v

Wollongong Wolves

Bruce Stadium

Bye: Marconi Fairfield

Please note, these fixtures are supplied by Soccer Australia, and are correct at time of printing. Please check local guides in case of changes. We accept no responsibility for any late changes to fixtures, or incorrect information supplied to us.

RESULTS ROUND 18

Northern Spirit 1
Sydney United 2

Adelaide City 1
Canberra Cosmos 0

Melbourne Knights 2
Gippsland Falcons 2

Sydney Olympic 5
Marconi Fairfield 0

Perth Glory 0
Newcastle Breakers 1

Carlton SC 2
Adelaide Sharks 2

Wollongong Wolves 2
South Melbourne 1

Bye Brisbane Strikers

TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	17	11	3	3	34	20	36
Sydney United	17	11	2	4	30	19	35
Adelaide City	17	10	2	5	28	14	32
Northern Spirit	17	9	2	6	20	18	29
Carlton SC	17	8	4	5	34	22	28
Sydney Olympic	17	8	3	6	32	23	27
Perth Glory	17	8	3	6	30	20	27
Brisbane Strikers	16	7	4	5	22	19	25
Marconi Fairfield	17	7	3	7	29	34	24
Newcastle Breakers	17	6	3	8	17	25	21
Wollongong Wolves	17	5	5	7	25	30	20
Adelaide Sharks	17	5	4	8	26	28	19
Melbourne Knights	16	3	4	9	16	26	13
Gippsland Falcons	16	3	4	9	10	29	13
Canberra Cosmos	17	1	2	14	12	37	5

RESULTS ROUND 17

South Melbourne 1
Adelaide Sharks 0

Adelaide City 3
Carlton SC 0

Northern Spirit 1
Perth Glory 0

Brisbane Strikers 2
Sydney Olympic 1

Sydney United 3
Marconi Fairfield 2

Canberra Cosmos 3
Newcastle Breakers 0

Wollongong Wolves 0
Melbourne Knights 0

Bye: Gippsland Falcons





ERICSSON CUP

WEEK 18
28-31 JANUARY
1999

UNITED PUMAS WIN AGAINST THE ODDS

NORTHERN SPIRIT 1
Marusic 70
SYDNEY UNITED 2
Burns 45, Griffiths 86
At North Sydney Oval, Sydney

By Bonnie Mersiades

In a thrilling match before another large North Sydney Oval crowd last Friday, Sydney United showed their pedigree when they defeated Northern Spirit with a goal from the exciting, surly-blond teenager, Joel Griffiths in the 86th minute.

The Bob Standers looked resplendent in their sea of white (with red and yellow) playing shirts, and seem to swell in numbers at every game as they garner forces for the so-called 'Spirit Army' in what they see as a fight — not only for the Ericsson Cup, but also for the best and brightest supporters.

However, Sydney United were not without their own reinforcements with a large number of vocal supporters making the long trip in peak hour traffic across town, with many of them wearing not Sydney United, but Croatian playing shirts, and taking up the opposite end of the ground in The McCartney Stand.

In fact, so large were their numbers, that the Sydney United players thanked their supporters before kick-off!

It made for a very electric atmosphere with surround sound, and from the outset, the game was fast and entertaining.

Northern Spirit coach, Graham Arnold, had left Clayton Zane out of the starting line-up and opted for the highly effective formation from the Marconi game, of Robbie Slater and Daniel Watkins up-front with Kresimir Marusic roaming behind them. Youngster, Jack Sobzyck, also earned his first start, with no less than seven of Spirit's players unavailable through injury or suspension.

While veteran defender, Velimir Kupresak, was still unavailable, Sydney United coach David Mitchell had almost a full complement and also opted to name experienced midfielder, Ante Moric on his return to the Ericsson Cup competition, on the bench.

For Spirit, Gabriel Mendez had the better of Walter Ardone and was able to control the midfield and distribute the ball very effectively; 'keeper, Paul

Henderson, saved a certain goal by tipping it over the bar at the last moment; a screaming header from Watkins hit the bar; and hero, Arnie, had his head at the wrong end of a boot.

For Sydney United, Griffiths and Mile Sterjovski were making trouble with their pace and deception; Jacob Burns was keeping Kresimir Marusic relatively quiet; David Barrett was not letting Slater out of his sight or body range; and — judging by the worried look on Arnold's face — Griffiths went close to being awarded a penalty when Arnold brought him down in the box.

That was just the first fifteen minutes!

Even though Burns and Barrett did their respective jobs well, Marusic and Slater, combining with Watkins, were able to make some good runs which put the Sydney United defence under pressure. Likewise, the Northern Spirit defence wasn't as crisp as they can be, and were content with playing it safely at times and giving away corners under the relentless pace of Griffiths, Burns and Sterjovski.

However, with Chi Chi Mendez also proving difficult for the Pumas, Northern Spirit were able to create the better chances, only to be let down by the woodwork or poor finishing.

The Bob Standers bayed for the referee when Slater tangled with Sydney United 'keeper, Andrew Clews. Referee Connolly judged that Clews had got to the ball, whereas the Northern Spirit supporters — and Robbie, who appealed to them — felt that their man was wronged.

Burns' goal came in the 45th minute after a Moric corner sailed nicely in front of the goal mouth, to be hit into the post. The rebound fell to Burns who was in the right position to put it neatly away. Unfortunately, the great spectacle on the field had to be celebrated with a flare (not the kind one wears) by someone off the field, instead of just cheers, applause and flag-waving as others do.

Slater immediately hit back but, once again, put it wide and high.

Sydney United were fortunate to go into the break with the one goal advantage. Although the game was end-to-end, Northern Spirit had the better of play.

The second half continued in a similar vein, with both teams playing hard and fast and the game flowing from end-to-end.

Just when Marusic started to get away a little more



Pumas' stars Ante Moric and Dave Barrett

often from Burns, and he and Mendez looked as if they might control the midfield, Sydney United would come back and neutralise any domination.

Despite this, Marusic managed to shake off Burns long enough to score a goal which had "CLASS" stamped all over it as it cannoned off his left foot from about 25 metres out, into the top right of the net, at the 70th minute. Even 'Kres' seemed mighty happy with it!

This quietened Sydney United momentarily, but with Northern Spirit continuing to exert influence and pressure (and also continuing with their wayward finishing including two more attempts which hit the woodwork from rookie Sobzyck and Mendez), Sydney United, to their credit, opted to keep playing attacking football.

Spirit defender, Paul Bilokapic, saved what looked like a certain match-winner with a timely clearance when Henderson was caught off his line; Marusic lined up another long range shot with his right foot — and missed; Watkins scored in the last stanza of the game — much to the Northern Spirit supporters' delight — only to be judged offside; and just when it looked as if the game would settle for a draw, a deflected through-ball from the still fast-running Burns found an unmarked Griffiths whose shot clipped the diving Henderson on the way to the back of the net.

The young man who was supposed to be selling ice creams was dismayed, as were the majority of the crowd but it didn't stop the loyal 'Bob Standers' swelling to full-voiced pleasure to acknowledge the efforts of their team, even after the final whistle blew.

Graham Arnold said that the missed opportunities cost Northern Spirit the game.

"We hit the post about four times, and missed so many chances, and we can't afford to do that."

Nonetheless, after three games in five days, he was

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 17,024

Referee: Gerry Connolly

Northern Spirit: Henderson, Marusic, Slater, Arnold, Mendez, Moss, Watkins, Bilokapic, Cunico, Langdon, Sobzyck (Zane, 88)

Sydney United: Crews, Barrett, Plesa, Vrkic, Burns, Ardone (Moric, 35), Sterjovski, Berry, Santalab, Griffiths, Bennett.

Yellows:

Vrkic, Plesa (SU)

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Burns (SU)
2: Mendez (NS)
1: Barrett (SU)

satisfied the team finished with six points out of a possible nine.

"We've still got seven first team players out, and we have to keep changing things around, so we're doing okay. Once we get some of them back, we should be looking okay for the rest of the season."

He praised David Mitchell and Sydney United for their efforts.

"Despite their troubles, they always come up with goods and it's a credit to Mitch and the players."

Mitchell said he couldn't heap enough praise on his players.

"Everyone knows we're broke and we don't know what's happening with the club. I couldn't ask for more from the players. They've done themselves proud, because they keep coming up with the goods."

He said the whole team has their eyes firmly on the competition championship and Ericsson Cup.

In summary, an exciting game in which both teams played football with flair and commitment.

Northern Spirit were let down by their finishing, and a draw probably would have been a fairer result. It is hard to find a weak player on either side, though Northern Spirit will undoubtedly be strengthened with the return of Rudan, Enes, Casserly and Crook and, eventually, players of the calibre of Cranney and Perinich.

PERINOVIC SEND-OFF INFURIATES MUNRO

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 2
Kiratzoglou 72, Kelic 86
GIPPSLAND FALCONS 2
Perinovic 30, Becvinovski 54
At Knights Stadium, Melbourne

By Dwyght Tuffnell

Melbourne Knights stole a point on Sunday at home to Gippsland Falcons, coming from 0-2 down to force a 2-2 draw.

The Falcons, yet again, finished the game a man less after striker Marko Perinovic received the red card in the 68th minute.

Falcons coach Stuart Munro was seething after the game, saying that the decision to dismiss Perinovic changed the course of the game.

"Every week it seems we get somebody sent off for very soft, dubious decisions" a livid Munro said.

"It turned the whole game, I want to know why these things are happening, I cannot understand these decisions.

"It's very disappointing. The boys worked so hard to get a result and we were in control of the game."

After a very quiet opening to the game, the Falcons took the lead in the 30th minute — their first real attack on the Knights goal.

Sash Becvinovski took the ball away from Joe Didulica and passed back for Robbie Puca. Puca crossed and Didulica, back-peddalling, watched it go over his

head to the far post where Perinovic was able to tap it in.

Didulica redeemed himself four minutes from half-time when he acrobatically tipped away a spectacular overhead kick from Will Hastie

The Falcons doubled their advantage nine minutes into the second period, courtesy of another Didulica blunder.

Ivan Jolic passed back to the Olyroo 'keeper but he completely missed his kick when trying to clear it.

Falcons striker Becvinovski couldn't

believe his luck as he ran onto the loose ball to tap into the empty net.

The home fans certainly let Didulica know what they thought of the mistake, booing him every time he went near the ball, and, a little unfairly, giving ironic cheers with every good clearance from a pass back from then on.

Perinovic was sent off after collecting a second yellow card from referee Mark Shield when he fouled Michael Reda in the 68th minute.

He was first booked in the 31st minute for dissent when fouled by Knights skipper Ante Kovacevic.

The home side pulled a goal back in the 72nd minute when Alex Kiratzoglou was on hand to head into the net Zeljko Susa's free kick, which had rebounded back off an upright.

Gippsland should have made the points safe ten minutes from time but substitute Brian MacNicol headed over when unmarked from an Adrian Savage cross.

Ivan Kelic had the opportunity to equalise but he headed just wide from Kiratzoglou's pinpoint cross.

He did level with four minutes to go. Dragi Nasteviski's corner kick fell right over the top of a scrum of players straight into the lap of Kelic who bundled the ball across the line.

Joe Biskic, in charge of his second game at the Knights, was disappointed with the first half and said that the second half wasn't much better.

"After the send-off, we really came back, but I'm only pleased with the last 20 minutes" said Biskic.

"We created more chances in the last 20 minutes than we did for the first 70 minutes.

"It (the send-off) gave us a big boost, I was pleased with the players efforts in the last 20 minutes" ended Biskic.

Munro felt that the Falcons had thrown away two points in letting the Knights get level, but was pleased with the overall performance of his side.

"We were playing really well, keeping our shape and making it hard for them" Munro said.

But there could be no doubt who Munro thought played the biggest hand in the Falcons letting a two goal lead slip.

"We were doing things we wanted to do but just too often I keep coming in after the games thinking feeling that decisions by the referee have influenced the game.

"I might get in trouble but I don't care. It's just happening too often."

MATCH STATS

Crowd: Approx. 3,500

Referee: Mark Shield

Melbourne Knights: Didulica, Nasteviski, Jelic, Kovacevic (Deak 59), Kelic, Kiratzoglou, Susa, Vukadin, Reda, Magdic (Collina 66), Kutlesovski.

Gippsland Falcons: Jevdjovic, Hopkins, Osman, Bell, Hutchinson, Ganosa, Perinovic, Hastie, Puca (Cassar 84), Savage, Becvinovski (MacNicol 76).

Yellows:

Melbourne Knights: Magdic 23, Kovacevic 31, Jelic 69
Gippsland Falcons: Perinovic 31, Osman 58, Savage 90, MacNicol 90, Cassar 90.

Reds:

Gippsland Falcons: Perinovic 68

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Osman (GF)
2: Kiratzoglou (MK)
1: Nasteviski (MK)



ERICSSON CUP

WEEK 18
28-31 JANUARY
1999

HORSLEY LEADS THE WAY

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2
Horsley 54, 80
SOUTH MELBOURNE 1
Coveny 70
At Brandon Park, Wollongong

By Rebecca Stanton

The Wollongong Wolves produced probably their best soccer performance Sunday evening at home ground, Brandon Park to defeat number one NSL team, South Melbourne, in a convincing 2-1 victory.

South Melbourne may be sitting pretty at the top of the ladder, but it was Wollongong who came out firing, controlling the run of play constantly throughout the whole game.

It was the Wolves with their well established set plays, and sharp passes that allowed them to continue to hold possession of the ball and in doing so they had South Melbourne's goalkeeper, Michael Petkovic

continuously under pressure.

A perfect opportunity for Wollongong came in the 15th minute when Petrovski solidly ran the ball up from the halfway line, leaving him only to beat the goalkeeper, but frustratingly for the Wolves a tight angled shot proved to be his only barrier.

South Melbourne's first real chance came in the 22nd minute when Coveny sent the ball flying from 25 meters out, allowing Wolves' Pogliacomi to lunge from his line and flick the ball over the bar, keeping the game neck and neck at 0-0.

Wollongong definitely looked the hungrier of the two teams and they placed the visitors backline under pressure on numerous occasions with many well directed passes and lots of exciting shots on goal.

After replenishing their appetites at half time it was the Wolves who still came out hungry and on the prowl, and in the 55th minute Captain, Matt Horsley struck the ball cleanly, slotting it in the back of the net, after good lead up work from Reid and Brooks, allowing the Wolves to take the lead to 1-0.



South Melbourne did not play as if they were leading the NSL, but with their experience and knowledge they were able to capitalize on an obvious error by the Wolves.

In the 70th minute after the Wolves lost possession in the midfield, South Melbourne's Coveny was able to slot the ball easily away taking the score to 1-1.

Moments later South Melbourne nearly had the match sealed, but fortunately for the Wolves a Melbourne shot struck the post and rebounded away from the goalmouth, keeping the game extremely close.

Just when we thought the Wolves were in for their sixth draw they found a last surge of energy and in the 80th minute Wollongong attacked their way to a second goal, allowing Matt Horsley to claim another goal, taking the Wolves ahead 2-1.

Matt Horsley definitely enjoyed the spotlight, as minutes later he had an exciting 3rd shot on target but keeper Petkovic pushed the ball behind the goals.

In the dying minutes of the game the tension on the field began to build and after

many yellow cards were awarded, South Melbourne found themselves not only a goal down but also a player less, as defender Nick Orlic committed an infringement on the Wolves keeper and was given a red card.

With their 2-1 victory, the Wolves showed their fans that they still have the potential to produce good, solid soccer.

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 2,882

Referee: G Leverton

Wollongong Wolves: Pogliacomi, Souris, Stanton, Horsley, Huxley, Brooks, Surjan, Chipperfield, Spencer, Petrovski, (Langan 85), Reid, (Dimoski 70), (Karavatakis 30).

South Melbourne: Petkovic, Losifidis, De Amicis, Orlic, Coveny, Trimboli, Curcija, Anastadiadis, Plak, Goutzoulis, (Tsekinis 60), Liparoti.

Yellows:

Wollongong: Brooks 35, Surjan 47, Huxley 68, Dimoski 82

South Melbourne: Goutzoulis 30, Liparoti 59

Reds:

SM - Orlic 85

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Horsley (W)

2: Chipperfield (W)

1: Coveny (SM)

MORIERA...CARLTON'S RONALDO

CARLTON SC 2
Moriera 49, 81
ADELAIDE SHARKS 2
Gibson 18, Polmer 34
At Optus Oval, Melbourne

By Ralph Barba

A barnstorming second half performance and a controversial equalising goal helped Carlton salvage a 2-2 draw against a determined Adelaide Sharks at Optus Oval on Sunday night.

The Sharks, with something to prove, entered the contest with former coach, Adrian Santrac at the helm after Manfred Schaefer was relieved of his post on the eve of the game.

The home team buoyed by the return of regulars Mark Atkinson, Lubo Lapsansky and Marco Bresciano, pulled off a selection shock by omitting Olyroo star, Simon Colosimo from the starting line up as a result of fatigue.

Hell bent on impressing the new boss, it was the Sharks who claimed the initiative early.

Corey Artone and John Gibson, who were prominent, combined with mobile target man Derek Poimer to put

the goal starved Sharks ahead after a sweet Gibson finish in the 16th minute.

Carlton's renowned work rate and penetrative attacks were non-existent with the visitor's goalkeeper, David Miller hardly troubled by the home team's lame strikes on goal. The Blues' pedestrian rear guard was again punished in the 35th minute when an Artone run and cut back, found the lively Poimer whose strike was clumsily deflected by the unbalanced Con Anthopoulos, into his own net, to make it 2-0.

Adelaide sniffing a much needed three points were feeding voraciously off Carlton's indecisiveness at the back. Clear misses by both Poimer and Alex Duric, failed to reward a visiting team that was playing as confidently as it has all season.

A revitalised Carlton however, was destined to make the Sharks suffer for their inability to finish the contest off in the first half.

A change at the main interval, Colosimo for Andrew Marth and a tongue lashing by coach, Eddie Krncevic, provided the catalyst for Carlton's change in fortune in the second half.

It was Latin goal poacher, Alex Moreira on the spot in the 48th minute, climbing above the Sharks' defence and heading in the Blues' first goal.

The home team was suddenly full of ideas with Joe

Tricarico and Colosimo forcing the Sharks back with every raid.

In the 69th minute, against the run of play, the dangerous Poimer found himself with a one-on-one chance to score after Anthopoulos lost his footing. His low angled shot was parried away by the agile Anastasiadis, who was clearly reveling in his return to first team action.

It was now all Carlton with Bresciano testing Miller after a lobbed through ball by Colosimo in the 71st minute.

It seemed the equaliser had to come and when it did it was in controversial circumstances.

Despite protestations from the Sharks' players, referee Jeremy Blaney ruled a Carlton throw-in after the ball looked to have crossed the line for a goal kick in the 81st minute.

The resultant Stergiopoulos throw-in was flicked on intelligently by Colosimo and met by Bresciano, whose sliced volley was expertly finished by goal sneak, Moreira on the turn after a goal mouth scramble.

Carlton went looking for the winner and were unlucky not to get it after Stergiopoulos shot wide in the 86th minute and David Cervinski miscued after attempting to finesse his shot over the line in stoppage time.

Sharks' coach Adrian Santrac, although ruing his team's missed chances, was thankful for the point. "It should've been over in the first half.

"We had six one-on-ones and we should've killed off the game. Irrespective of the result, I'm still proud of my

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 3,053

Referee: Jeremy Blaney

Carlton SC: Anastasiadis, Anthopoulos, Steriopoulos, Douglas, Marth (Colosimo HT), Bresciano, Atkinson, Moriera, Lapsansky, Tricarico (Josifovski 89th min), Cervinski

Adelaide Sharks: Miller, Alagich, Castro, Kuzmanovic, Souris, Kokkinopolis, Artone (Pezos 58), Milosevic (Tibaldi 54), Poimer, Duric (Iandiorio 89), Gibson.

Yellows:

Carlton: Marth 25, Moriera 81

Sharks: Souris 48

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Tricarico (Carlton)

2: Colosimo (Carlton)

1: Moriera (Carlton)

boys".

Carlton coach, Eddie Krncevic said he was pleased with his team's comeback but was forthright about his side's first half performance.

GLORY SLUMP CONTINUES

PERTH GLORY 0
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 1
Buonavoglia 15
At Perth Oval, Perth

By Richard Kreider

Perth Glory's indifferent form deteriorated even further last Sunday following a 1-0 loss to Newcastle Breakers at Perth Oval.

The once former ladder-leader remains sixth on the Ericsson Cup, as coach Bernd Stange digs deep to find an answer for his team's decline.

Their mediocre showing looks to be reflecting on the turnstiles, where the 10,464 attendance is the fifth lowest in Glory's three season history. Perth midfielder Troy Halpin made his 100th NSL appearance, ironically against his former and only other club.

A 15th minute strike from Breakers' nippy forward John Buonavoglia inflicted the Perth side with its fourth consecutive loss and the third time in four weeks that they have been unable to find the net.

The Breakers' rearguard of Bob Catlin, Rob Shannon, Todd McManus, Shane Pryce and Adam Sanderson were in a determined mood all afternoon, no doubt the

3-0 loss to Canberra Cosmos on Australia Day was still embedded in their minds.

"This game was supposed to be an opportunity for us to rid ourselves of the current slump," said Stange. "Our style at the beginning of the season was good, but now it has gone. Maybe I have changed the side a little too much over the last few games, but that is always necessary when the team struggles and injuries begin to take its toll.

The other issue is a lack of discipline from our high profile players," said Stange. "We will not make the finals if we continue with the way we are playing," he said.

John Markovski, who was made captain in place of the suspended Gareth Naven is equally stuck for a solution, and admits his contribution was not as good as it could have been.

"It wasn't easy penetrating their defence which was crammed with players whenever we went forward," said Markovski. "We played too much through the middle when we should have been using the flanks."

Glory burst out of the blocks from the opening whistle but although they were pleasing their supporters with a direct offensive style, they still looked vulnerable when being counter-attacked.

Italian sweeper Gianfranco Circati, who turned 28

today (Tuesday), is still coming to grips with the Australian brand of soccer after collecting a second yellow card in as many weeks.

Circati in fact conceded the 14th minute free-kick which led to Buonavoglia drilling the ball through a maze of legs and past goalkeeper Danny Milosevic to give the Breakers a surprise lead.

As expected, the goal sparked greater determination from the home side, but while the team was able to put together a string of forward moves, they continually broke down upon reaching the Breakers goal.

The second-half continued in the same vein with Glory pressing for an equaliser, the closest they came was in the final minute of play when Robert Trajkovski picked out substitute Paul Strudwick who was just 10 metres away from the Newcastle goal, but he sent his unchallenged header centimetres past Bob Catlin's left hand upright.

Glory's day was soured even further three minutes from time when referee Perry Mur gave Bobby Despotovski a yellow card for dissent, which meant a week's suspension for the striker for a fourth caution.

Con Boutsianis may also miss next week's clash with Adelaide Sharks after suffering a 75th minute hamstring injury.



Scorer John Buonavoglia was the hero in Perth

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 10,464

Referee: Perry Mur

Perth Glory: Milosevic, Trajkovski, Miller, Hay, Deans (Trpceviski 73), Circati, Garcia, Boutsianis, (Wilkinson 80), Markovski (Strudwick 73), Despotovski, Halpin.

Newcastle Breakers: Catlin, Pryce, Roberts, McManus, Sprod, (Sanderson 19), Ritchie, Buonavoglia, Wiecezorek, Shannon, Haythornwaite (Owens 61), Yoon (Umlil 70).

Yellows:

Perth Glory: Circati 18, Despotovski 87

Newcastle Breakers: Wiecezorek 40

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Pryce (NB)

2: Catlin (NB)

1: Halpin (PG)



ERICSSON CUP

WEEK 18
28-31 JANUARY
1999

CARDOZO'S STYLISH RAMPAGE TRAMPLES SORRY STALLIONS

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 5
Cervinski 12, Cardozo 65 & 82, Tome 77
Augerinos 83
MARCONI FAIRFIELD 0
At Belmore Sports Ground, Sydney

By John Economos

Pablo Cardozo the Ericsson Cup's top goalscorer and Sydney Olympic's ace 26 year old striker, not only scored a fabulous brace to stretch his personal tally to 16 goals, but intelligently and unselfishly laid on another two to destroy Marconi 5-0 last Sunday night at the Belmore Sports Ground.

In the space of just 18 minutes of the second half, the Cardozo continuously caned an under strengthened Marconi who had taken the field minus six of their regular stars missing in action through injuries or suspensions.

Marconi following a healthy start to the season, have now plunged well out of the Top Six, securing just five League points from their last nine matches.

The always quiet but confident ball-playing marksman Cardozo was however in or sympathetic mood towards Marconi's plight.

Cardozo elegantly struck the target in the 65th, brilliantly set up substitute striker Norman Tome in the 77th, again nailed the net in the 82nd, and finally a minute later, laid on Olympic's fifth goal for substitute Elias Augerinos to score to help celebrate Augerinos' 150th game in the NSL.

"Surely after such a devastating display by Cardozo, national coach Raul Blanco must seriously consider him for the Australian-based squad. Blanco knows Cardozo very well having coached him for two seasons when both were employed with the Adelaide Sharks.

What made Cardozo's magnificent display far more meritorious, came in the 83rd minute after he already had scored two. Holding possession in front of the target and needing just one more goal for his second-ever hat-

trick in the NSL, Cardozo showing total unselfishness, squared the ball to his friend Augerinos to lash home with his lethal left boot.

A dispirited Marconi, who were missing Brendan Renaud, Dominic Longo, Mark Babic, Marcus Phillips, Mike Smith and Francis Awaritefe, cannot entirely blame the 'kids' that filled in, especially twin centre-backs Michael Galuzzo and Buddy Farrah who solidly denied Olympic goals in the first session (other than Adrian Cervinski's 12th minute header).

In fact two of Marconi's senior players failed to take responsibility to lead and inspire their much younger ones. Both gave a tame display, offering no resistance to a second half rampaging Sydney Olympic. With Marconi's 'gearbox' almost non-existent, Olympic's midfielders of Brett Emerton, Scotty Thomas, Jason Culina and Milan Blagojevic poured through.

Olympic scored their solitary first half goal in the 12th minute when an Emerton cross fired in from the right flank fell to the back post where Olympic's striker Adrian Cervinski was lurking to blast a downward header into the net.

Disaster almost struck Olympic in the 23rd minute as a Scotty Thomas back header was barely finger-tipped over his crossbar by an alert but back-peddalling goalkeeper George Bouhoutos to prevent an 'own-goal'.

A minute from the break Marconi's skipper Brad Maloney had a chance from the right but lingered too long to fire his shot on goal which the Olympic defence blocked. Christian Care following up blasted the rebound well over the top.

In the 65th minute the 'Cardozo Show' erupted to signal Marconi's demise as Culina's cross from the right saw goalkeeper Brett Hughes palm Tome's header onto his crossbar. The rebound hit back in by Emerton, was again miraculously blocked by Hughes, but the second rebound was viciously slammed into the target by 'That Man' Cardozo.

In the 77th minute Cardozo drifted back very deep into his midfield to dig out possession and set sail for Marconi's box. Spotting strike-twin Tome wide on the



Zoric and Emerton get to grips at Belmore on Sunday. The home team won 5-0.

right Cardozo perfectly fed him with a lovely flat through-ball for Tome to score.

In the 82nd minute the elegantly balanced Cardozo brilliantly volleyed a cross from the right with his outstretched left boot to slam the target for his 16th goal in the National League this season.

A minute later Cardozo stunned Hughes, the Marconi team, as well as the Olympic supporters, with his unbelievable display of total unselfishness in setting up Augerinos to score his goal, also with an outstretched left footed volley.

Other than Cardozo, best for Olympic were industrious midfielder Thomas, lanky stopper Ante Juric and pivotal defender Mehmed Durakovic.

Marconi had few satisfactory performers other than young stoppers Galuzzo and Farrah, plus, despite the scoreline, Hughes the 'keeper who was making his debut for the club, who was ruthlessly exposed by his non-existent midfielders.

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 3,162

Referee: E Lennie

Sydney Olympic: Bouhoutos, Baillie, Durakovic, Juric, Brennan, Emerton (Augerinos 78), Thomas, Blagojevic, Culina (Gonzalez 78), Cardozo, A. Cervinski (Tome 60)

Marconi Fairfield: Hughes, Trajanovski, Galuzzo (Zoric 72), Kim, Farrah, Tomasevic, Gibson (McDonald 75), Care, Maloney, S. Babic, Bruni (Van Cuylenburg 60)

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Cardozo (Olympic)
2: Thomas (Olympic)
1: Juric (Olympic)

A laconic Frank Farina later lamented: "It was unrealistic to expect a result with so many of our players out and with so many changes that were made. You can't put a team on the park that has five or six midfielders and it was hard to fill the gaps with so many experienced players missing.

"For our next game against Canberra, I hope to have back on deck Ante Covic, Brendan Renaud, Dominic Longo and maybe Mike Smith," ended a calm but disappointed Marconi coach.

Meanwhile Olympic's boss Branko Culina refused to be carried away with his heavy victory, stating: "It took the second goal to get that killer instinct going, and as soon as we did score it, Marconi died.

"But here I stress again, it's no point getting carried away as we beat a team that for the moment is down in the dumps. We have got to do it again next Friday up at Newcastle and again the following week to get momentum real going," ended Culina.

MORI'S HUNDREDTH SINKS CANBERRA REVIVAL

ADELAIDE CITY 1
Mori 24
CANBERRA COSMOS 0
At Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide

By Margaret Bowden and Donald Campbell

Gone are the early days of this season when the Hindmarsh fans could count on exciting soccer and five goals per game.

Adelaide City has returned to the play safe patterns of previous Matic years. Again last night the small crowd voiced their disapproval. Damian Mori's 100th goal of the season was the highlight in an otherwise lacklustre display, which saw Alex Tobin, Angelo Costanzo and Milan Ivanovic dig deep to keep the ever attacking Cosmos at bay.

Canberra, resurgent under coach Tommy Sermani, who was reportedly seen walking across Lake Burley Griffin after his team's 3-0 drubbing of Newcastle on Australia day, were as unlucky as the Sharks were against them last Sunday.

Peter Buljan twisted and turned past two defenders in the box to fire the first real shot of the game in the 20th minute — a stinger from seven

yards.

Petkovic dived to save but needed two grabs at the ball. Ironically, Mori's goal came as a direct result of another Canberra near miss.

Lindsay Wilson and Paul Roberts combined on the left to force a corner which was half cleared. Canberra pumped the ball back into the still crowded penalty area. Petkovic punched the ball instead of grabbing it. Costanzo bootied it clear in a scramble of players.

It could have gone anywhere but fell for Mori in the centre of the park.

With the whole Canberra team forward, Mori turned on the speed to race goalward.

Vilson Knezevic bolted off his line but City's goalscoring machine held the ball on the edge of the box, then slotted it clinically under Canberra's keeper: 1-0 City in the 24th minute. The crowd went berserk, celebrating Mori's century goal for City and sensing a big win.

How disappointed and disapproving they were for the rest of the match! Tuesday night's City hero Bradley Armour

had several chances but failed to find the net; Wilson totally nullified Carl Veart who seems only a shadow of his former self; Bradley Hassell shot high and wide; rising star David Terminello missed several chances.

City's final passes and crosses continually went astray, much to the fans' discontent.

Roberts controlled the Canberra midfield all night, constantly feeding Buljan who terrorised the City defence with his brilliant dodging runs into the box and fierce shots. Most were blocked by 88.5 Coast FM Player of the Match Tobin.

Surprisingly Buljan was subbed in the 53rd minute. Anthony Magnacca, on for Leo Langone at half-time, threatened to score several times but was cut out by Tobin and Costanzo.

Mori had his chance for an action replay of the first goal midway into the second half, but Nick Purdue put in the tackle of the game to dispossess him eight yards from goal.

Canberra's best chance to equalise came in the 84th minute when captain Norman Kelly smashed a 20 yard free kick towards goal.

It deflected off Talladira, catching Petkovic out of position, but went just over the bar.



MATCH STATS...

Crowd: (3500) (estimated)

Referee: L Prospero

Adelaide City: Petkovic, Armour (Sabljak 74), Ivanovic, Tobin, Talladira, Mori, Veart, Costanzo, Hassell, Terminello, Kim.

Canberra Cosmos: Knezevic, Popovich, Wilson (Gonzalez 77), Marcina, Buljan (Musitano 53), Langone (Magnacca 46), Miglietti, Roberts, DeJesus, Purdue, Kelly, Magnacca.

Yellows:

Adelaide City: Armour 43, Kim 82
Canberra Cosmos: Kelly 83, Gonzalez 93

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Alex Tobin (Adelaide City)
2: Paul Roberts (Canberra Cosmos)
1: Angelo Costanzo (Adelaide City)

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SOUTHERN DIVISION

Weekend Results

VIS	1	South Melbourne	2
Melbourne Knights	4	Bulleen Inter	1
Carlton	8	Albury	1

League Ladder (updated after w/end round)

	Pts
South Melbourne	29
Carlton	23
VIS	24
Gippsland Falcons	20
Melbourne Knights	17
Bulleen Inter Kings	14
Albury Wodonga	1



Round 19

Saturday 6 February

Gippsland Falcons v Albury Wodonga,
(Mobil Park, 4.30pm)
VIS v Carlton,
(Grange Reserve, 3.30pm)

Sunday 7 February

South Melbourne v Melbourne Knights,
(Bob Jane Stadium, 3.30pm)
Bulleen Inter v Bye

LEADING SOUTHERN SCORERS

Andrew Mashoian	South Melbourne	11
Jovanco Novacevski	Carlton	6
Scott McDonald	VIS	6
Deniz Ekicic	Carlton	5
Tony Ouliaris	Carlton	5
Erhan Bayraktar	South Melbourne	5

NORTHERN SUMMARY (AUSTRALIA DAY)

There was a full round of matches on Australia Day and the highlights included Wollongong Wolves 5-0 win over the New South Wales Institute of Sport.

Steve Karavatakis opened for Wolves in 28 minutes and goals followed thereafter from Chad Bishop in 39, Michael Clare with two goals in 65 and 80 minutes, and substitute George Mahanidis got on the sheet in 89 minutes.

Wolves played very well and took their chances, after the Institute missed a couple early on. Keeper Jeff van Strattan deputised ably for NSWIS and was not at fault for any of the goals.

Wollongong Wolves Colts also scored five goals in a five-one win over Sydney Olympic Academy. Brendon Santalab's double was notable and the other goals for the Colts came from Nathan Broad, Nicholas Karakolevski and Luke Zadkovic. Orhan Dincer replied for Olympic Academy.

Marconi Fairfield Colts produced the shock of the round with a one all draw at home to the AIS. When Tommy Bajurin put the AIS in front early

on it looked as if the Institute would have a regulation victory, but defence in depth by the Colts prevented any more goals and Anthony Mondello got behind the AIS backline in a breakaway to beat the keeper for the equaliser.

Steve O'Connor felt that his players were flat after some recent good performances and defensive ball watching cost the vital goal.

Sydney Olympic had an excellent three-one win over Queensland Academy of Sport, which had several regulars on first team duty. Elias Augerinos scored first for Olympic, followed by Peter Zorbas and John Kyrzopoulos, while the QAS goal came from Owen Filewood.

Newcastle Breakers had goals by Tony Markovski and James Kemp to thank for its 2-0 home win against ACTAS. The visitor kept pressing for a goal but could not find a way through.

Please note the Northern Division table and the leading scorers in both North and South does not include last weekend's games. Next week they will updated when Roy Hay returns from his overseas trip.

NORTHERN DIVISION

Round Seventeen (Australia Day)

Wollongong Wolves	5	NSWIS	0
Wollongong Wolves Colts	5	Sydney Olympic Academy	1
Marconi Fairfield Colts	1	AIS	1
Sydney Olympic	3	QAS	1
Newcastle Breakers	2	ACTAS	0

Northern Spirit v Sydney United Colts (Match postponed)

Sydney United v Marconi Fairfield (Match postponed)

Northern Spirit Colts v Bye.

Weekend Results

Northern Spirit	2	Sydney Utd	2
Sydney Utd Colts	1	Newcastle Breakers	5
AIS	9	Wollongong Colts	0
NSWI	6	Northern Spirit Colts	0
Marconi Colts	0	ACT AC	0
Wolves	1	Olympic Academy	2

League Ladder (not updated from last weekend's round)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Northern Spirit	15	11	1	3	30	11	34
AIS	15	9	5	1	52	12	32
Marconi Fairfield	15	9	5	1	46	12	32
Sydney Olympic	16	10	2	4	43	18	32
Newcastle Breakers	15	9	4	2	29	14	31
QAS	15	9	1	5	45	21	28
Wollongong Wolves	13	9	1	3	33	11	28
NSWIS	13	7	3	3	27	12	24
Sydney United	15	6	3	6	27	22	21
Marconi Fairfield Colts	15	5	2	8	16	26	17
ACTAS	16	3	1	12	23	44	10
Sydney United Colts	14	3	0	11	15	43	9
Northern Spirit Colts	14	2	2	10	14	56	8
Wollongong Wolves Colts	15	1	1	13	8	66	4
Sydney Olympic Academy	15	0	3	12	10	50	3

Round 19

Friday 5 February

Newcastle Breakers v Sydney Olympic,
(Breakers Stadium, 5.45 pm)

Saturday 6 February

QAS v Northern Spirit,
(Suncorp Stadium, 4.15 pm)
Northern Spirit Colts v AIS,
(Christie Park, 4 pm)
Sydney United v Marconi Fairfield Colts,
(Edensor Park, 5 pm)
Wollongong Wolves Colts v Sydney United Colts,
(Brandon Park No 2, 4 pm)

Sunday 7 February

Sydney Olympic Academy v NSWIS,
(Wentworth Park, 5 pm)

Monday 8 February

ACTAS v Wollongong Wolves,
(Bruce Stadium, 4.30 pm)
Bye v Marconi Fairfield

LEADING NORTHERN SCORERS

Mark Hagger	Marconi	15
Russell Miner	QAS	12
Simon Catanzaro	NSWIS	9
Kevo Guleserian	AIS	9
Daniel Kukucka	Sydney United	9
Anthony Mondello	Marconi Colts	8
Anthony Bauer	Newcastle Breakers	8
Chad Mansley	Newcastle Breakers	8
Paul Tuturevski	Wollongong Wolves	8

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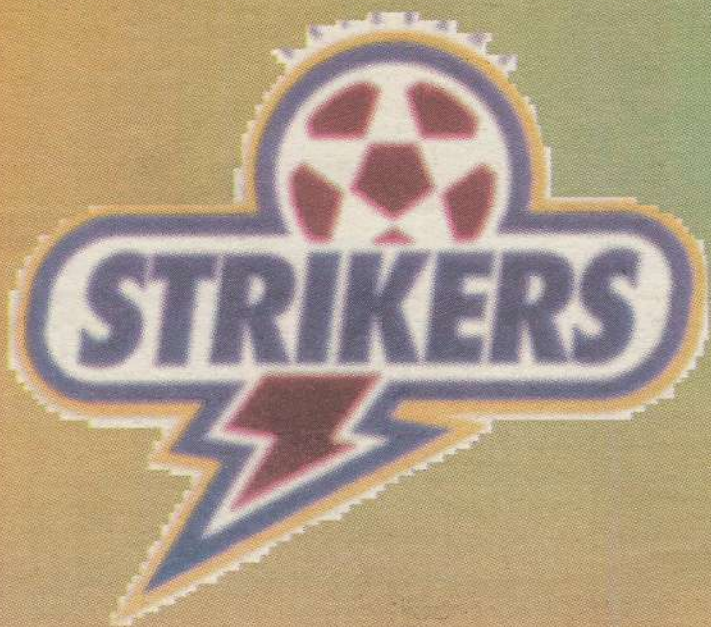
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"Wonder Kid 2"



ERICSSON CUP

WEEK 17
26 JANUARY
1999

UNITED CONTINUE THEIR AMAZING RUN

SYDNEY UNITED 3
Griffiths 40, Sterjovski 60, 83pen
MARCONI FAIRFIELD 2
Gibson 9, 50
At Edensor Park, Sydney

By John Economos

Despite their financial crisis, Sydney United gallantly continued their winning streak last Tuesday night, defeating Marconi 3-2 at Edensor Sports Centre with Marconi's fiery striker Francis Awaritefe sent off one minute before half-time for an alleged head butt on United's stopper Joe Vrkic.

The resilient United twice fell behind and twice came back strongly before wrapping up all three League points to cement their second spot on the ladder.

Marconi fielded a patched up side having to play without their experienced twin stoppers Mark Babic and Dominic Longo. But Frank Farina's two young replacement defenders Michael Galuzzo and Buddy Farrah filled in extremely well with a solid and honest display, refusing to shirk their senior task.

Following a melee in the 44th minute — which saw players from both sides racing in, and with Vrkic on the ground holding his jaw — referee Simon Micallef consulted with his linesman John Bowdler, then flashed the red at Awaritefe.

Marconi's left midfielder Chad Gibson drew first blood as early as in the ninth minute. A cross from

the right by Kris Trajanovski confused United's defence, and allowed the unsighted Gibson (despite his peroxide bleached hair!) to easily tap into the target from inside the six yard box.

Five minutes from the break United's teenage striker Joel Griffiths equalised following a free kick from the right which tenacious stopper Velimir Kupresak won the aerial duel to knock down for the young marksman to score.

Tackling became violent in the first session as spite crept in. It was a wonder no-one suffered serious injury. United's centre-back Velimir Kupresak copped a vicious kick to his left ankle late in the first session and was forced to discontinue 10 minutes after half time.

Five minutes after the break Marconi again grabbed the lead and again it was through the hard working Gibson who drilled a low drive angled in from the right to hit the bottom left corner of the net.

In the 58th minute coach David Mitchell brought on the explosive and energetic Danny Townsend who injected much needed spark to United's side.

On the hour mark United again equalise through magical striker Mile Sterjovski, when he fired a low snap shot from 10 metres outside the box.

In the 67th and 68th Marconi's skipper Brad Maloney fired long ranged shots, the first screamed just over the horizontal whilst his second effort deflected off a United defender.

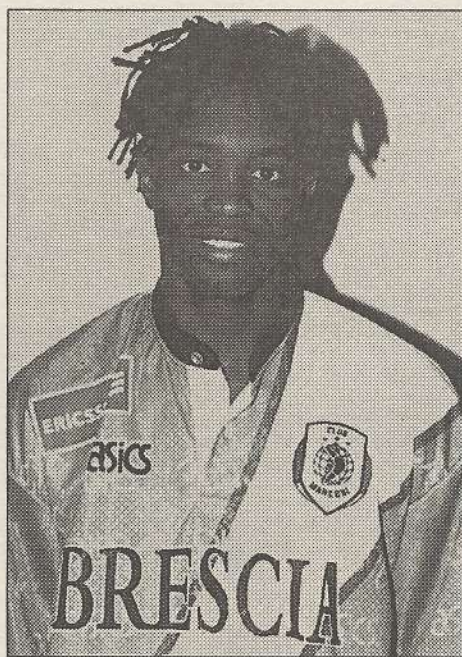
Seven minutes from the bell Sterjovski hit the winner via the penalty spot.

Mobile midfielder Walter Ardone accelerated into

the box where he crashed into Marconi's young defender Michael Galuzzo for Micallef to award the penalty.

Three minutes into injury time United's industrious left midfielder, Peter Bennett, cannoned his 20 metre drive off the crossbar.

Best for Sydney United were teenage striker Mile Sterjovski who not only scored a 'double' but is rapidly maturing under Mitchell's guidance, plus substitute Danny Townsend and Peter Bennett. Marconi was



Francis Awaritefe ... his red card was a turning point in the Sydney derby.

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 6,498

Referee: Simon Micallef

Sydney United: Crews, Barrett, Kupresak (Day 55), Plesa, Vrkic, Santalab (Berry 71), Ardone, Burns, Bennett, Sterjovski, Griffiths (Townsend 58).

Marconi Fairfield: Aceski, Farrah, Kim, Galuzzo, Tomasevic, Trajanovski, Maloney, Care, Gibson (McDonald 84), Awaritefe, S.Babic (Invincible 78).

Red:
Awaritefe 44 (Marconi)

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Sterjovski (United)
2: Gibson (Marconi)
1: Bennett (United)

well served through Chad Gibson, young stopper Michael Galuzzo and Sean Babic.

Marconi's boss Frank Farina stated later: "I was happy with the way the boys played after being down to 10 men which was always going to be a struggle.

"For two of their goals I was disappointed because we just gave them away. As far as the red card on Francis (Awaritefe), the referee didn't see the incident and it was all going on on the linesman's (John Bowdler's) word."

Meanwhile United's coach David Mitchell, who didn't want to say too much, stated: "It was our worst performance of all season, credit to Frank Farina and his boys who played well.

We lost possession too much in the first half and I had to rocketed them at the break. We were fortunate to get all three points."

UNIMPRESSIVE SOUTH SQUEEZE HOME

SOUTH MELBOURNE 1
Anastasiadis 74
ADELAIDE SHARKS 0
At Bob Jane Stadium, Vic

By Dwyght Tuffnell

A less than convincing performance gave South Melbourne their sixth win in a row and kept them on top of the Ericsson Cup table by four points.

A John Anastasiadis strike in the 74th minute sealed the points with only their third meaningful attack of the game.

It was little hard on the Sharks, they deserved at least a point.

They had far more scoring opportunities, more possession and, until the 74th minute, their defence was well on top of things.

South coach Ange Postecoglou said it was something that the team had to put up with every week.

"I'd be surprised if they (the Sharks) have played a better game than that all year" said Postecoglou.

"It was a struggle today. I thought they'd play well, but I can tell you something they probably didn't play that well against Canberra.

"We face that week-in, week-out and that's why we're where we are, sometimes we do get outplayed but we're not where we are by accident."

Manfred Schaefer, coach of the Sharks, said that his side had played well but had deserved something more out of the game.

"You can see why one team was on top by the way they finished the goal" he said.

"I thought we did well out there. We put them under pressure and certainly had some chances.

"South Melbourne are going to be the team that's there at the end of the year because they've got winners in their team.

"Even when the crowd was getting on their back they still knocked it around and took their time."

South were completely off their game in the first half as they consistently gave the ball away and, at times, looked shaky in defence.

They did threaten in the opening minutes. Anastasiadis, who rediscovered his scoring touch last week against Gippsland, headed straight at David Miller.

Those who thought this would set the trend for the rest of the half were wrong, as South, try as they might, just couldn't get it together.

The Sharks weren't much better though Front-men Derek Poirer and Alex Duric appeared to be operating on a different wave-length.

Poirer though, did test 'keeper Michael Petkovic early on with a powerful drive but the South custodian dealt with it comfortably.

The visitors were getting forward enough, and getting into good scoring positions.

Alex Castro found himself inside the area on the end of a John Gibson flick on and he did well to control the ball and shoot almost in the one movement but, again, Petkovic was equal to it.

Gibson was the next to come closest for the Sharks, blasting a loose ball just inches over the bar from Richie Alagich's corner.

South showed no improvement at the beginning of the second half as it was the Sharks, again, who looked the more likely to score the opening goal.

Branko Milosevic took advantage of a back-peddling South defence and got in a left foot shot from the edge of the area that Petkovic had to palm over the bar.

The veteran midfielder threatened South's goal again soon after but lashed a shot over the bar after Poirer had beaten Robert Liparoti and got in a cross.

The home side had not even had a shot at goal since the 2nd minute.

Anastasiadis changed that in the 70th when he volleyed wide from Paul Trimboli's floated cross.

Three minutes later South got the goal that a now impatient crowd had been nowling for.

Vaughan Coveny can take just about all of the credit for the goal.

He robbed Poirer just inside his own penalty area and then embarked on a massive solo run that took him into a position where he could shoot from.



Branko Milosevic ... Man of the Match.

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 6,192

Referee: David Dwight

South Melbourne: Petkovic, De Amicis, Orlic, Coveny, Trimboli, Curcija, Anastasiadis, Cuzzupe (Tsekinis 59), Polak, Goutzioulis, Liparoti.

Adelaide Sharks: Miller, Alagich (Tibaldi 82), Castro, Kuzmanovic, Souris, Kokkinopitis, Milosevic (Arione 77), Poirer, Duric (Porter 80), Pezos, Gibson.

Yellows:

South Melbourne: Liparoti 29, Polak 66, Trimboli 89
Adelaide Sharks: Castro 16, Souris 84

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Milosevic (SM)
2: De Amicis (SM)
1: Kuzmanovic (AS)

Any thoughts of goal-of-the-season type of goal were scuppered when he scuffed the shot across the goal.

Luckily, waiting on the far post, was Anastasiadis to slide the ball home.

"I didn't expect us to set the world on fire today" Postecoglou said.

"I'm so proud of the players and the way they went about things. To back up (from the Gippsland game) and face that sort opposition and still get the points makes me happier than winning 5-0. A win like that shows character."

Schaefer, who said this was a do-or-die game for the Sharks, said he would have been satisfied with a draw.

"I thought we took the game to them" Schaefer said.

"You're always happy to get a draw against teams like South Melbourne.

"We've been playing this way almost all season, we just fall back and mistakes" ended Schaefer.



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COSMOS WIN!

CANBERRA COSMOS 3
Buljan 13, Langone 19, Marcina 88
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 0
At Bruce Stadium, Canberra

By Nick Guoth

The shackles were finally broken as the Canberra Cosmos won their first match since January last year. The game was the same as many beforehand except this time the ball found the net.

The win also gave the team from the capital the Prime Minister's Cup.

The result, 3-0 to the home team, was a fair indication of the game. Two early goals set up the win. "That sort of lead makes it difficult for any opposition to come back", said Canberra coach Tom Sermanni.

Further to the win, it was the first time this season that Canberra had kept a clean sheet. The

defence marshalled by sweeper Amarildo Miglietti and keeper Vilson Knezevic limited Newcastle to rare chances and most shots were from long range.

The battle in the midfield was tough all night with one of Newcastle's best, Tom Haythornthwaite finishing the game with a bandage around his head. His duel with his ex-teammates was inspiring, whilst Paul Roberts for Canberra showed great inspiration.

The first goal came after thirteen minutes. Doug Marcina hounded Glenn Sprod into an errant clearance which fell to Leo Langone.

Langone charged into the penalty area and when tackled the ball fell to Peter Buljan who turned and scored from 12m out.

Six minutes later a long ball from defence found Buljan whose delicate layoff was met by Langone. Leo's first time shot looped over a stranded Bob Catlin and into the net to double the score.

It wasn't until the 20th minute that Sang-Chul Yoon

had Newcastle's first shot of the game and this was well met by Knezevic.

A few minutes before the break Yoon had an excellent chance when he was put through one-on-one with Vilson, but the keeper pulled off an excellent save.

Newcastle came out in the second half exerting more pressure, but were continuously foiled by the defence of the home team, especially near the penalty area.

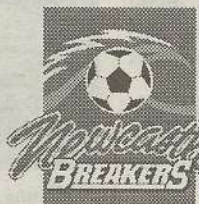
Meanwhile Canberra were left to making breaks against the general run of play.

The closest the Breakers came to scoring was when Yoon dribbled past Knezevic, only to find Amarildo back in defence to intercept and clear at the last moment. The locals also had a number of good chances, the best fell to Buljan whose shot was tipped over by Catlin.

A few minutes to go, and the small crowd starting to settle knowing the win was theirs, a pass from Norman Kelly found Langone whose layoff was met by a running Doug Marcina. Marcina rode one challenge and shot truly to start the champagne bottles popping.

Tom Sermanni was pleased with the result but stated "we still need to set our aims accordingly, and must now concentrate on future games. The result will ease the pressure on the players."

Lee Sterrey said he was disappointed. "Their attitude left a lot to be desired. They just didn't come to play."



ARMOUR-PLATED ZEBRAS!

ADELAIDE CITY 3
Armour 72, 83, Mori 76
CARLTON 0
At Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide

By Margaret Bowden and Donald Campbell

How sweet Adelaide City — revenge for the 4-1 drubbing Carlton inflicted on them in the first round. Bradley Hassell played a dynamic 90 minute role in City's first win over the Blues, while Bradley Armour scored the vital first goal only five minutes after coming on as a sub.

Not content with one, he scored again 11 minutes later — his first double in the National League.

Carlton played some of the slickest soccer seen this season, but City keeper Jason Petkovic played a blinder. Carlton's Simon Colosimo was a revelation. Working in tandem with free ranging Lupo Lapsansky, his superior ball skills, non-stop thinking, pin-point passing, speed and shots on goal made him a stand-out for the 88.5 Coast FM 'Player of the Match'.

The first half saw some brilliant passages of play but no goals. Hassell set up Damian Mori and Dongi Ki Kim for shots in the opening minutes, then forced Blues' keeper Adrian Cagalj into a tough save after 17 minutes.

In the 31st minute he latched onto a Milan Ivanovic

pass and smacked a scorcher from 20 metres, bringing a world class save from Cagalj.

David Terminello and Nick Sabljak worked well with Hassell in the midfield, while at the back Ivanovic, Alex Tobin and Angelo Costanzo gave super striker Alex Moreira no room.

Con Anthopoulos, Andrew Marth, Colosimo, Lapsansky and Moreira played precision one-touch football from the Carlton defence into attack.

Lapsansky forced spectacular saves from Petkovic in the 7th and 30th minutes. Marcus Stergiopoulos kept Mori on a tight rein while Sean Douglas cleaned up everything in defence.

Robert Markovac came out firing in the second half, almost scoring from a corner in the first minute. City counter attacked through Hassell and Sabljak. Cagalj dropped Sabljak's stinging shot at Mori's feet, but Mori failed to connect. Big Marth countered for Carlton, slamming a piledriver towards the far post. Petkovic scrambled it clear.

City went into safety mode, backpeddling to Petkovic. The crowd boomed.

This spurred on Colosimo, who went on a breathtaking 60 metre solo run.

His finishing shot went wide. Moreira then escaped Tobin to shoot from close range. Again Petkovic saved.

Then Armour came on for Sabljak. It was like setting off a skyrocket on cracker night. His aggressive running at the Carlton defence left Terminello free in the centre.

Terminello passed wide to Mori on the right; Mori let



fly a high cross to the far post, Armour roared in and headed past Cagalj. Hindmarsh erupted: 1-0.

Moreira replied with a point blank shot at Petkovic, knocking him off his feet as he made the reflex save of the match! Hassell then made a surging solo run down the left into the box, drew Cagalj out, and angled the ball to Mori running in on the right. Mori eluded Stergiopoulos to finish clinically: 2-0. And the fans were singing.

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 4,000 estimated

Referee: Eddie Lennie

Adelaide City: Petkovic, Ivanovic, Tobin, Talladira, Mori, Veart, Costanzo, Hassell, Terminello, Sabljak (Armour 67), Kim.

Carlton SC: Cagalj, Anthopoulos (Pir 83), Stergiopoulos, Colosimo, Douglas, Marth, Atkinson, Moreira (Oularis 76), Lapsansky, Cervinski, Markovac (Josifovski 59).

Yellows:

Adelaide City: Kim 26
Carlton: Atkinson 69

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Simon Colosimo (Carlton)
2: Bradley Hassell (Adelaide City)
1: Jason Petkovic (Adelaide City)

The fierce Armour hammered the final nail into the Carlton coffin seven minutes later. He dispossessed Colosimo in defence, sped 70 metres past the Carlton midfield and defence, and finished with an unstoppable shot into the right hand corner of the net — 3-0 City.

Carlton had a chance for a consolation goal in the final minute, courtesy of a free kick on the 18 yard line, but the shot hit the City wall.

WOLVES LOSE THEIR BITE

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 0
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 0
At Brandon Park, Wollongong

By Soccer Weekly

Where did it all go wrong for the Ericsson Cup's excitement machine of last season? Last Tuesday night they struggled once again, drawing 0-0 with lowly Melbourne Knights in front of 2,728.

Last season the corresponding fixture pulled double the crowd.

In this game Wolves completely dominated territorially, with the corner count heavily in their favour, but they still could not score when needed.

Mind you, an upset almost occurred in injury time when alert Wolves gloveman, Les Pogliacomi, stopped an effort from Knights' Alex Kirazoglou from inside the box.

The only chance to speak of for the home side was fringe Olyroo Noel Spencer's shot smashing against the post five minutes from halftime.

There were also efforts from Horsley, Surjan and Chipperfield, but none beat Olyroo keeper Joe Didulica.

While fully committed to a defensive plan for this game, new coach Joe Biskic would be pleased with the form of defenders Vukadin and Jolic, who were stoic at the back and repelled everything thrown at them by a Wolves attack that simply is lacking in imagination and perhaps, a bit of luck and confidence.

Nevertheless, George Souris at the back was terrific and it is just a pity that such a form player is a defender and not a striker.

It did not help the home team's cause to have injuries to two players capable of unlocking miserly defences — Esala Masi and Michael Brooks.

Masi went off just 18 minutes with a gashed foot that needed stitches.

Brooks suffered a knee injury after looking a genuine menace and hopefully he won't be out too long because, after a slow start to the year, his form in front of goal is



sorely needed.

There were yellow cards to Robbie Stanton, one of the few good performers for Wolves, and sub Ray Younis.

In the early game, Wollongong beat the NSW Institute side 5-0 ... at least they know the way to goal!

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 2,728

Referee: B. Hugo

Wollongong Wolves: Pogliacomi, Souris, Ceccoli, Stanton, Horsley, Brooks, Surjan, Chipperfield, Spencer, Masi, Reid.

Melbourne Knights: Didulica, Nastevski, Jolic, Vukadin, Susa, Karl, Kelic, Kirazoglou, Kutlesovski, Magdic, Collina.

Yellows:

Wollongong Wolves: Younis 21, Stanton 89

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: George Souris (WC)
2: Robbie Stanton (WC)
1: Ivan Jolic (MK)



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STRIKERS LOOKING A GENUINE TOP SIX CHANCE

BRISBANE STRIKERS 2
Harris 43, Tollenare 79
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
Cardozo 80
At Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane

By Glenn Davis

Brisbane Strikers become the big movers in the Ericsson Cup after capping off Australia Day celebrations with a thrilling 2-1 win over Sydney Olympic at Suncorp Stadium.

The Strikers' victory — their second Sydney scalp in three days following a 2-1 win over Marconi two days earlier — saw the young side slip into seventh place, just off the pace for a Top Six berth at the end of the season.

Coach John Kosmina, who has excelled in giving youth a go in the wake of a series of injuries and suspensions, has nothing but praise for the Strikers.

The Strikers produced an inept first half performance against Olympic in which they were easily outclassed in midfield but showed true courage after the break to turn the tide for a well deserved win.

"We lacked intensity in the first half," Kosmina conceded.

"We didn't get running enough, but we had more people help out in the second. They showed a lot of character in the second half and I was very pleased with their efforts."

The Strikers are well-placed to achieve Kosmina's goal of 42 points for the season to make the play-offs.

Brisbane survived a torrid first half in which Olympic looked far superior but surprisingly the visitors went to the break trailing 1-0.

Strikers midfielder Jeromy Harris broke the deadlock, diving low to curl a header off a Kasey Wehrman corner over the head of Olympic keeper George Bouhoutsos minutes before the interval.

Olympic had only themselves to blame for trailing at the break after striker Pablo Cardozo missed an open goal after just four minutes.

Socceroo Brett Emerton fired in a cross to Cardozo but somehow his shot was saved brilliantly by keeper Clint Bolton down low to his right before it curled over the crossbar.

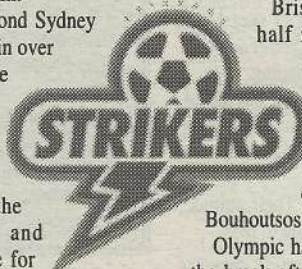
The Strikers shook off their first half blues to dominate for lengthy periods after half-time and were finally rewarded with their second goal in the 79th minute.

Substitute Reece Tollenare, who came on for youngster Wayne Srhoj, rifled home the Strikers' second from close range after receiving a perfect cutback on the left from Nick Meredith.

However, the Strikers' two goal buffer lasted less than a minute when Cardozo made up for his early blunder, snapping a powerful shot from close range to give the visitors some chance to share the points.

Unlike previous matches in which the Strikers wilted under pressure, this time the homeside hung on to clinch a valuable three points and a sniff at a top six berth later in the season.

The Strikers victories over both Marconi and now Sydney Olympic places Kosmina in a healthy position with regards to team selections in the upcoming matches.



MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 4,110

Referee: Eugene Brazzale (Melb)

Brisbane Strikers: Strikers, Bolton, Gwynne, Zoricich, Wehrman, McLaren, Srhoj (Tollenare 58m), Harris (North 75m), Meredith, Hughes (Knipe 81m), Davidson, Stefanutto.

Sydney Olympic: Bouhoutsos, Thomas, Tsekenis, Tome (Cervinski 67m), Culina, Cardozo, Emerton, Brennan (Gonzalez 58m), Junj, Durakovic, Blagojevic.

Yellows:

Strikers: McLaren 9, Meredith 30.

Players Votes of the Year:

3: Emerton (SO)

2: Bolton (BS)

1: McLaren (BS)

Missing once again from the Olympic match was former Socceroo Sean Cranney, midfielder Chay Hews, striker Andy Harper and defender Steve Laybutt all of whom are close to a return.

See our Strikers special on the middle pages.

ADVANCE SPIRIT FAIR

NORTHERN SPIRIT 1
Cunico 74
PERTH GLORY 0
At North Sydney Oval, Sydney

By John Vrtaric

On a lovely cool summer's night Perth Glory captain, Gareth Naven, suffered his second dismissal at the whim of referee Mark Shield and all but handed the three points to Northern Spirit who, in the end, laboured to achieve the victory.

Recent tabloid features suggest that the singing troubadours that congregate at Spirit Point (Bob Stand) are predominantly British expatriates, but if the rousing rendition of Advance Australia Fair emanating from the stand, albeit somewhat ahead of the official recital, is any indication, the 'Bob Standers' (or is it 'Spirit Pointers', they do need an official name!) contain a great number of dinky di Aussies.

Having played in 35 degree heat in their home loss to Adelaide on Sunday, Perth was faced with the exhausting task of flying across to the other side of the country two days later. Spirit themselves had a torrid encounter in a 3-2 victory over Sydney Olympic after having Mark Rudan dismissed in the 28th minute.

Perth welcomed Robert Trajkovski back from a long term injury and had all but one notable player, Vinko Buljubasic, available for selection. Coach Bernd Stange opted for a typically defensive away formation with Bobby Despotovski playing in a deep lying support role behind John Markovski.

Former Italian Serie A defender Gianfranco Circati, recently signed, made his debut for Perth alongside another recent addition, Craig Deans in the centre of defence.

Spirit's coach Graham Arnold still missing seven regular players, including Robert Enes, Luke Casserley, Adem Poric, Troy Cranney, Tony Perinich, Mark Rudan and Ian Crook, was forced to select players in unfamiliar roles.

Daniel Watkins, a strong performer in a striking role in the previous two games, found himself in a right wing-back role, whilst Robbie Slater, again, filled a strikers role. Gabriel Mendez, finally, had his first starting role since his return from injury.

The game got off to a slow start — it wasn't until the 10th minute that saw the first exciting action. Perth goal keeper Danny Milosevic was strolling up to the edge of his area following a clearance when the ball was swiftly returned towards him via a Robbie Slater header. The advancing Milosevic was wrong-footed but just

managed to divert the goal for a corner with a great dive low to his left.

Mendez was prominent in the early exchanges, continuously making himself available for a pass. He added a degree of control and playmaking ability to Spirit's midfield not obvious in previous games.

Mendez showed his class in the 17th minute when he intercepted a Perth pass and brilliantly flicked it first time to an unmarked Matthew Langdon.

Langdon relayed the ball quickly to Kresimir Marusic whose attempted cut back from the by-line, destined for an unmarked Slater, was well intercepted by Danny Hay.

Three minutes later, a corner produced the first opportunity for Spirit. The corner was partially cleared but was quickly returned into the penalty area via a Langdon cross. Slater was lurking on the far post but just failed to steer the ball into the net and it was again cleared away for a corner.

The resultant corner from Marusic found the head of Arnold who flicked it just wide to the right of Milosevic's left post.

In the 25th minute the game was altered dramatically with Naven's send off.

What looked a harsh decision at the time proved to be correct, as later viewing revealed a two footed lunging tackle on Mendez that deserved immediate dismissal.

The game became a battle in midfield which Spirit dominated but were unable to penetrate up front where Clayton Zane was well held by Circati, whilst the buzzing Slater tried hard, but found it impossible to rid himself of the impressive Deans.

Perth had its best chance in the 37th minute when a slip by Paul Bilokapic allowed Markovski to latch onto the ball just outside the penalty area. He teased a couple of defenders before laying the ball off to Con Boutsianis whose rasping left foot shot flew just over the cross bar.

A couple of half chances, one to each side, concluded the first half with neither side making the most of them and the half ended scoreless.

Mendez was again in action early in the second half when his short pass to Zane was layed back to Michael Cunico whose first time shot from about 25 metres beat Milosevic and his right hand post.

A short corner in the 59th minute, on Spirit's right, showed Mendez at his best. Receiving the ball from Slater, Mendez beat his first opponent and with an exaggerated dummy he gave himself the extra time he needed and pushed the ball past his second rival towards the by-line. He produced a perfect cross onto the head of Arnold who proceeded to guide it over the bar.



Michael Cunico ... the long-range specialist unlocked the Glory defence with a beauty on Australia Day.
Pic by Melbin

A 64th minute counter attack begun with the ball cleared out to Markovski near Perth's right hand touchline. As he looked to the centre Markovski saw an area bereft of players except for a rampaging Hay who quickly broke out of defence. Markovski's pass, with the outside of his left foot, was well placed in front of Hay and he was able to reach the ball first, just in front of Paul Henderson, but his first time shot slipped just over the bar.

In the 68th minute, a pass from Bilokapic that rolled just inside Perth's penalty area provided Spirit with the perfect chance to score. Watkins chased the ball with Perth's goal keeper Milosevic — the goal keeper slid towards the ball to clear it and as he did so Watkins fell over him. The referee saw it as a foul and awarded Spirit what seemed a harsh penalty and Milosevic a yellow card.

The provider of the pass was elected as the penalty taker but his shot to the goal keeper's right was easily saved and he failed to take advantage of the rebound which fell to him.

The game seemed destined to end in a scoreless stalemate.

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 17,722

Referee: Mark Shield

Northern Spirit: Henderson, Arnold, Bilokapic, Moss, Langdon, Watkins, Cunico, Mendez (Stub-Mills 89), Marusic (Bosnar 90), Slater, Zane.

Glory: Milosevic, Hay, Circati, Deans, Trajkovski (Strudwick 85), Miller, Naven, Garcia, Boutsianis, Despolovski (Halpin 78), Markovski.

Red:

Glory: Naven 25.

Yellow Cards:

Spirit: Bilokapic 66, Arnold 78.
Glory: Circati 16, Despotovski 30, Milosevic 68, Miller 70, Deans 78.

Votes for Player of the Year:

3: Mendez (Spirit)

2: Bilokapic (Spirit)

1: Hay (Glory)

Perth tried hard to catch Spirit on the counter attack and on a couple of occasions they came close before Spirit produced the decisive move to seal the game.

In the 74th minute an attack down the left resulted in an innocuous pass rolled infield from Langdon to Cunico. With no opportunity to pass to anyone Cunico turned back towards the goal and strode across the field before he took a couple steps towards the goal and unleashed a blistering shot that dipped just over Milosevic and flew into his right hand corner.

Zane had a chance to open his home ground scoring account in the 82nd minute when a well flighted, deep cross from the right by Slater sailed perfectly onto his head. His flick towards Milosevic's right hand post was well struck but snuck agonisingly past it.

The last few minutes petered out tamely and Spirit deservedly took the three points and set themselves up for a climb up the table.

Mendez controlled the midfield and was the outstanding player on either side. Bilokapic continued his good recent form, giving Markovski a very torrid time, indeed. Arnold, who was very happy with the performance of his young players, marshalled his defence well, whilst Marusic was at times dangerous but not as dominant as in recent games and generally kept in control by Michael Garcia.

Perth were best served by their defensive troika of Hay, Circati and Deans but seemed to miss a midfield playmaker like Troy Halpin who was on the bench.

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'Fabulous' Fab Ravaneili in action for Marseille against Auxerre in the French League



Argentine U/20 captain Esteban Combiasso kisses the South American U/20 trophy. Argentina are the winners.



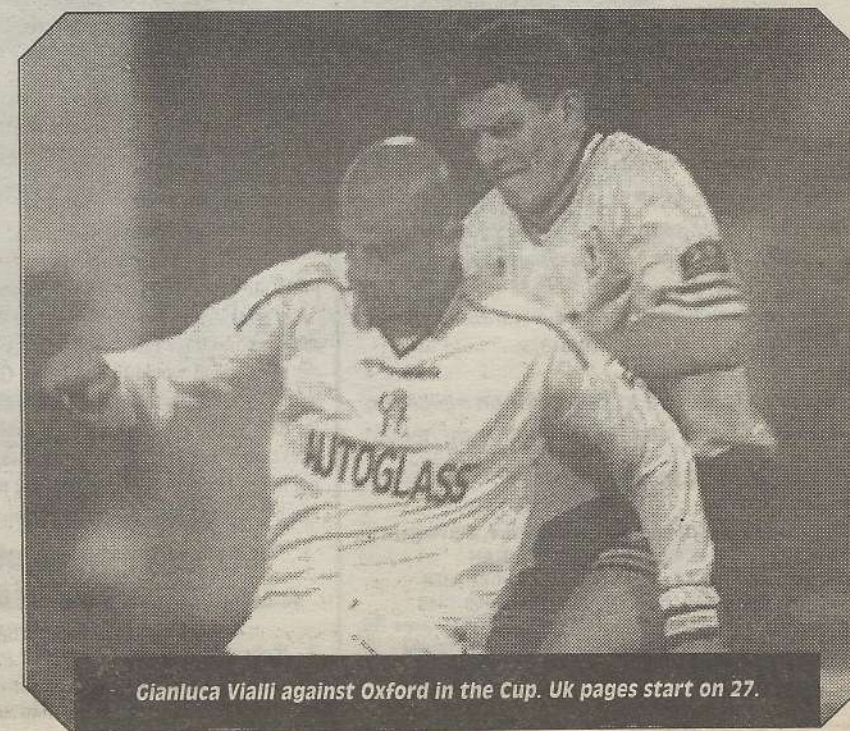
Attilio Lombardo back in Italia and playing for Lazio against Inter. Italy page is on 24.



New Barca star Frank de Boer playing against ex-Villa star, Zaragoza's Savo Milosevic. Euro pages start on 25.



Yes we've beaten Liverpool ... Man Utd after scoring their Cup winner at Old Trafford



Gianluca Vialli against Oxford in the Cup. UK pages start on 27.

Compiled by

GREECE

Soccer Weekly

A.D. Akrotos

WEEKLY LEAGUE REVIEW

KENDALL THINKS HE CAN
KEEP ETHNIKOS FROM
RELEGATION

It seems not so long ago Howard Kendall was part of a Championship winning Everton side. But since then battles against relegation and an acrimonious parting with the Blues have hardened the once affable Toffee boss.

Never one to shirk a challenge, Kendall can be forgiven for biting off more than he can chew as he has accepted the mother of all challenges in Greek football-saving last placed (and perennial cellar dwellers) Ethnikos Asteras from relegation.

Kendall came to Ethnikos two months ago and has been scouring the land of warm beer and rainy days for some "graft" players to pull the club out of the fire. Ethnikos has thus far scored just four goals in the league and has drawn four games without a victory.

ARSENAL'S NICOLAS ANELKA
ON OLYMPIAKOS LIST

So far we have had George Weah and Zinedine Zidane on the Reds' shopping list but undeterred by their failure to sign either of these two players, the club has now set its sights on French international and Arsenal forward Nicolas Anelka.

Olympiakos has made the European Cup quarterfinals and with the first leg against Juventus in Turin just around the corner (March 3) the team is looking to bolster its roster in order to compete with the Italian giants.

REDS BEING PAINTED YELLOW

One of the biggest worries on the mind of Olympiakos coach Dusan Bajevic is the number of yellow cards some key members of his team have earned during the season.

With a game against Panionios last week (5-0), the first leg of the Greek Cup quarterfinals against a strong Xanthi side midweek (whom Olympiakos just beat 3-1 last week) and then the big derby with AEK, Bajevic

would love to have a full first team squad for the championship run-in but the joke doing the rounds at the moment is that he might have to buy an entirely new team if the club's disciplinary problems don't ease up.

SELL OUT!

Tickets for the European Cup quarterfinal return leg with Juventus will go on sale tomorrow (Feb. 3) but the number of calls to the ticket office for the return leg, (even though the first leg has not yet been played yet), suggests a bumper, bumper crowd will be there to watch the "Legend" humble the "Old Lady"!

Juventus has still not asked for any tickets for its supporters for the second leg, but insiders believe the number will be between 3,000 and 4,000, assuming that many supporters want to make the trip across the Ionian Sea to watch the Greeks go through to the semis.

Meanwhile Olympiakos has asked Juventus to make more tickets available for its supporters to travel to Turin to see the European Cup quarter-final tie on March 3.

Juventus originally made just 6,500 tickets available to the Greeks for the Delle Alpi but not only are Greeks more likely to travel abroad for their team, but this is the biggest game, in the history of Olympiakos. Besides, Italy is just about the easiest country to travel to for Greeks.

MORE TRANSFER RUMOURS...

The Ilija Ivic and Alexis Alexandris saga continues to grow (although well short of the (remember him?) G. X. Georgiadis — PAO saga) with Glasgow Celtic being added to the list of teams interested in Alexandris and Salernitana has also come in for Ivic.

Celtic is already in danger of losing its crown from last season to cross-town rivals Rangers in the Scottish Premier League while Salernitana is struggling to keep its Serie A status in Italy, currently in 17th place.

VLACHOS SIGNS ON WITH
PANATHINAIKOS

Panathinaikos has swooped to sign Andrew Vlachos from Carlton in the Ericsson Cup.

Vlachos, a 22-year-old midfielder scored 14 goals in 22 games for Carlton last season and impressed Panathinaikos president Giorgos Vardinoyiannis who is looking to strengthen his club for the championship run-in after having already signed Takis Fissas from Panionios.

AGATHOKLEOUS ALREADY
UNAVAILABLE FOR ARIS

Cypriot signing Marios Agathokleous, who made his debut for Aris recently, will be out for at least a month after injuring his right knee. The Aris forward came on as a substitute in the 72nd minute of Aris' 3-1 victory over OFI but the injury now leaves Aris with just one recognised forward, Apostolos Liolidis.

COMINGS AND GOINGS
FROM OLYMPIAKOS ...
MAYBE

Toullo Umberto Periera Da Costa, who scored a goal against Argentina in the 1995 Copa America in Uruguay for Brazil, is said to be on the market and would like to join a Greek team, with Olympiakos, the likely choice considering the club's deep pockets and the possible losses of Alexandris and Ivic. Club sources say they are not interested but comments like that never mean much when it comes to Greek football.

AFASH SPEAKS OUT
AGAINST GREEK LEAGUE

Mohammed Afash, a midfielder for Ionikos, has lashed out publicly after his team was defeated 7-4 on penalties in the third round of the

Greek Cup by league leaders Olympiakos, claiming the Greek league is fixed.

Afash's team took a 1-0 lead in the 15th minute of the match and then, after an equalizing goal by the defending league champions, Ionikos struck right back to take a 2-1 lead.

But in the 41st minute things changed as Olympiakos was awarded a questionable penalty while Ionikos was reduced to 10 men.

Yiannis Xanthopoulos also spoke out, saying he didn't believe a penalty should have been awarded, and also saying things like this don't happen in other countries, just Greece.

Ionikos goalkeeper Vangelis Pourliotopoulos didn't deny the penalty, saying it all happened too fast, but he did note letting in seven goals in one game was the worst day of his life.

Olympiakos coach Dusan Bajevic noted that shouts of "fixed" always sounded, whenever his team won games with questionable calls and proceeded to add (with tongue firmly stuck in cheek) that maybe it would be better for his team not to play in the Greek Championship at all in order to give the other teams a better chance of winning.

SITTING PRETTY

Olympiakos coach Dusan Bajevic is happy that his team is sitting on a six-point lead at the top of the Greek Championship, but he wants everyone to know that the season hasn't finished yet.

Bajevic noted that there are still 17 games left to play and he is warning his players not to think the championship is over. Bajevic was happy with his team's play, beating Panionios 5-0.

NEW DEFENDER FOR THE
REDS?

Kofi Abonsai reportedly inked his name to a contract, which will make him an Olympiakos defender until 2003. The Ghanaian defender left Panelefsiniakos after Saturday's draw with Ethnikos.

Abonsai will reportedly make \$50,000 (15 million drx.) for each of the first two seasons, \$60,000 (18 million drx.) for the third and fourth seasons and \$70,000 (21 million drx.) for the fifth.

Meanwhile unsettled Peter Oforiquaye, another Ghanaian, will reportedly return from his homeland during the week after playing in Ghana's African Cup game against Mozambique.

The player has been AWOL several times already and makes little secret of his desire to play in Italy, so whether he returns in time for the derby on the weekend is this week's \$64 question.

70 FANS INVADE THE FIELD

Those fun loving hooligans from the north have done it again. About 70 fans of PAOK, the largest team in northern Greece, invaded the practice ground in Nea Efkarpi, outside Thessaloniki, last Monday.

The fans were still angered by PAOK's 1-0 loss on the previous Sunday to Ethnikos Asteras in Kesariani, a suburb of Athens.

Ethnikos Asteras played in the second division last year; but thus far is enjoying much success in the first division, now tied for eighth place in the Greek Championship.

PAOK, on the other hand, had a chance for second place in the league had they won, thanks to a loss by AEK in Xanthi.

With the loss and a win for Panathinaikos, however, PAOK is relegated to fourth place with 32 points, one point behind AEK and two behind Panathinaikos. All three teams are chasing league leaders Olympiakos but second place in the Greek Championship is good enough for a qualifying spot for next years' Champions League and a big payday.

But the PAOK fans who invaded the field and forced the practice to end after just 15 minutes should remember one thing: It is because of them that PAOK does not have 35 points already. In the eighth week of the Greek Championship PAOK hosted Olympiakos but the game was never finished as fans invaded the pitch after sever-

al questionable calls from the referee.

When the decisions came down from the league, Olympiakos was awarded the victory and the three points while PAOK not only lost out on the points from the game, but was then deducted an extra three points for the mess.

SOUTH AMERICA COMES TO
PAOK

PAOK has reportedly signed 30-year-old Colombian Adolfo Valencia, who has been playing with Independiente.

Valencia is a Colombian international and took part in last summer's World Cup.

He has reportedly signed a five-month contract worth \$150,000, and has had stints with Bayern Munich and Atletico Madrid.

IN BRIEF

- Roberto Carlos Farfan Quispe, the Peruvian ace who was the talk of Panathinaikos just last week, has reportedly signed a three-year, 160 million drx. contract with Veria.

- Toni Savevski, AEK's veteran midfielder, will miss four-to-six weeks after injuring his shoulder in the first division loss to Xanthi.

- Panionios captain Antonis Sapountzis was injured in the loss to Olympiakos and could be out for one month, bearing in mind Panionios plays the first leg of their European Cup Winners' Cup match against Lazio in Rome on March 4.

- Giorgos Podaras, a defender for Panelefsiniakos has signed for Panathinaikos which leaves the Panelefsiniakos defense in dire need of some new bodies as former teammate Kofi Abonsai has just signed with Olympiakos.

- AEK's intended target Paolo Di Canio of Sheffield Wednesday has instead opted to stay in England with West Ham.

GREEK CUP

The quarter final draw for the Greek Cup played over two legs (January 27 and February 17) are as follows:

Olympiakos v Xanthi

Lykoi v Iraklis

Athinaikos v Kalamata

Panserraikos v Panathinaikos

MATCH SUMMARY
(held over from last issue)

Ishmael Ba took advantage of a poor back pass in the opening minute of the second half to lifted his team to a 2-1 win over 2nd placed AEK last Sunday at Xanthi Stadium. The two teams went into the locker at halftime deadlocked at one goal each, but as soon as play restarted Xanthi was able to inch ahead and secure three points.

Nikos Kostenoglou was the unfortunate player for AEK as he weakly headed a ball back to goalkeeper Elias Atmatsidis.

Ba, however, was running right alongside Kostenoglou and when the pass came down softly Ba was able to control it and then blast in a shot past Atmatsidis from point blank range.

Xanthi scored the first goal of the game in the 35th minute and were in control for most of the first half. Xanthi's star attacker, Thomas Kiparissis, got in behind the AEK defence on the left side and sent a tough, spinning shot towards the net.

Atmatsidis did great to get a hand on the ball as he dove to his left, but the ball just spun off his hand and just crossed the goal line before hitting the right post.

AEK was able to draw level in the 41st minute as Toni Savevski was able to get an open shot on Xanthi keeper Yuri Bucek.

Bucek, however, never got a chance to touch the ball as Xanthi defender Nikos Karageorgiou came barging

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Compiled by

GREECE

Soccer Weekly

A.D. Akratos

WEEKLY LEAGUE REVIEW

in, deflecting the ball onto the near post and into the back of the net.

Moments before, in the 37th minute, AEK had a golden chance with a Giorgos Donis shot, but Bucek did a great job to deflect the ball onto the post and then had enough presence of mind recover the rebound.

Most of the second half was one long, sustained attack from AEK. But the Xanthi defense fell back into place in order to protect their lead and it paid off.

The best two chances AEK had to get back on level ground each came in the 86th minute. First, Demis Nikolaidis was dispossessed and when the ball went towards the left side of the area there was just Savevski and Christos Maladenis.

Unfortunately the two AEK players ran into each other the ball ran loose to the scrambling Xanthi defence.



Xanthi's Kehagias

Seconds later Nikolaidis again found himself in the area with the ball, this time thanks to a long through ball from Evripidis Katsavos, but with Yiannis Papadimitriou on his back and Bucek coming off his line, Nikolaidis was unable to get a shot off.

XANTHI: Bucek (gk); Havos; Venetidis; Papadimitriou; Karageorgiou (c); Kehagias; Ba (Vilanakis, 70); Mansourian (Kartalis, 90); Kiparissis; Patsatzoglou; Geladaris.

AEK: Atmatsidis (gk); Kopitsis (Kassapis, 57); Maladenis; Kalitzakis; Kostenoglou; Zikos; Markos (Katsavos, 57); Savevski; Karayiannis; Nikolaidis (c); Donis (Batista, 46).

ANDRIOLI ET. AL. FALL TO PANILIAKOS

Paolo Andrioli made his much-anticipated debut with new-look Aris, but no one could stop Paniliakos from taking this one as the home team won, 3-1, at the National Stadium of Pirgos.

Giorgos Papandreou was first to write his name on the scoresheet as he scored from the penalty spot in the second minute when Paniliakos was awarded a spot kick after Vangelis Mitsopoulos took down Panagiotis Ziakkas.

Andrioli did have a good game, setting up chances in the 40th and 50th minutes, as well as having a hand in Aris' late goal. The best of the two first half chances was the latter when Andrioli fed Carlos Flores, who went in one-on-one with Paniliakos goalkeeper Angelos Georgiou.

Cesar Rosales was able to net the game winner for Paniliakos in the 74th minute after a Papandreou header.

The final goal came three minutes into time added on when Aris' Yiannis Mallous shot the ball into his own net.

Giorgos Koltzidas was the lone scorer for Aris as he headed home a corner from Andrioli in the 84th minute.

PANILIAKOS: Georgiou (gk); Saroon; Togiass; Tasiopoulos; Tatsis; Papandreou; Pappas; Rosales (Yiannakidis, 78); Nousias; Ziakkas (Koltzos, 88); Jazinski (Moschoyiannis, 38).

ARIS: Karteryiannakis (gk); Kizeridis; Andrioli; Koutsis; Georgiadis; Loumboutis (Panopoulos, 67); Mitsopoulos (Mallous, 52); Nagoli (Sigurgeirsson, 84); Liolidis; Koltzidas; Flores.

CLOSE BUT NO CIGAR IN O-O DRAW

Both teams came close, but neither was able to pierce the other's net as Proodeftiki and Ionikos played out to a 0-0 draw at Koridallou Stadium.

The best chance may have been in the 37th minute as Ionikos' Nikos Frusos blasted in a shot that hit Proodeftiki goalkeeper Vangelis Karasavvas' post.

Vangelis Pourliotopoulos made an earlier save for Ionikos when, in the 22nd minute, Markos Dimos gave it a go and again in the 52nd minute from Isaac Almanidis. Karasavvas may have saved the one point for Proodeftiki in the 73rd minute when Darian Muchotringo fired in from two meters, but couldn't get it past the keeper.

PROODEFTIKI: Karasavvas (gk); Pantos; Ambelas; Dagas; Pantelidis; Yiannopoulos; Dimos (Papadopoulos, 66); Al Jaher; Almanidis; Kazantzis (Fouskas, 40); Routzieris.

IONIKOS: Pourliotopoulos (gk); Pangouras; Pachatouridis; Kljajevic; Xanthopoulos (Konstantinou, 89); Daraklitsas; Afash; Brewster; Frousos; Rodriguez; Muchotringo (Cornelius, 83).

TWO LATE GOALS LIFT IRAKLIS

Marios Christodoulou and Michalis Konstantinou each netted a late goal to lift Iraklis over Apollonas, 2-0, at Kaftatzoglio Stadium.

Christodoulou was first to score, netting his goal in the 83rd minute, after some deft passing in front of goal.

Konstantinou's goal came a little easier as he was brought down by Kostas Ioannou in the area and was then awarded a penalty shot. Konstantinou made no mistake as he beat Apollonas goalkeeper Halkias.

Iraklis definitely had the better of the game towards the end as Ebenezer Hagan's shot was off the mark in the 85th minute and Savvas Kofidis had hit the post a minute earlier.

IRAKLIS: Stoyiannis (gk); Semos; Karatzov; Stoltidis; Kostis (Christodoulou, 73); Velentzas (Anderson, 63); Kasiba; Kidoda (Berneanu, 33); Kofidis; Konstantinou; Hagan.

APOLLON: Halkias (gk); Kolitsidakis; Lachanas; Sp. Hatzis; Ioannou; Damigos; Alexis (M. Hatzis, 87); Anastasakos (Fourtuzi, 66); Bertholt; Papadimitriou; Dicoume (Lambriakos, 60).



Apollon fans.

OFI DRUBS KAVALA 4-0

Four different players got in on the action last Sunday as OFI downed Kavala, 4-0, at Iraklio Stadium. Nikos Nioplias, Mohammed Diara, Predrag Mitic and Iordanidis each found the back of the net for OFI.

Iordanidis was first in the 34th minute when he took a cross from Mitic and outjumped Kefalas to the ball to head the ball past Kavala goalkeeper Panagiotis Logaras. Diara followed just two minutes later when he blasted

in a shot and Mitic capped off the first half with a 42nd minute goal and Nioplias tallied the final goal in the 89th minute.

Kavala had its best chance to get on the scoreboard in the 90th minute when the referee awarded a free kick from 11 metres out, but OFI keeper Arian Bekai stopped the shot from Christos Athanasiadis.

OFI: Bekai (gk); Stavrakakis; Dermizakis; Papadopoulos; Skentzos; Dedes; M. Diara; Marinakis (Adamcik, 75); Iordanidis (Koutsopoulos, 82); Nioplias; Mitic (Danielson, 64).



The Cat ... Olympiakos keeper Eleftheropoulos.

KAVALA: Logaras (gk); Koltis (Athanasiadis, 46); Mitev (Karaisaridis, 46); Kavakas; Kefalas; Karadimos; Enuagwuna; Udesse; Pisz; Dikozis; Nasiopoulos.

FIVE GOALS AND A SIX-POINT LEAD

Olympiakos emphasised its position as leader of the Greek Championship with a 5-0 thrashing of Panionios on Sunday at the Olympic Stadium and in the process stretched its lead to six points over second-place Panathinaikos.

The rain of goals was a welcome relief for Olympiakos coach Dusan Bajevic, who was worried that his team may have been concentrating on next week's derby with AEK. But not only did Bajevic's boys help ease his anxiety, but both AEK and PAOK, the former second and third place teams, lost on the road.

That puts Panathinaikos back in second place and a full six points behind as the first half of the season is one game shy of ending.

The five goals from Olympiakos came from just three men as Ilija Ivic and Vasilios Karapialis each scored twice and Predrag Djordjevic chipped in with the middle one.

The first goal came from Karapialis, who received a tremendous pass from Ivic to open the scoring in just the third minute.

Ivic was just outside the area with two defenders in front of him. He saw Karapialis charging down the middle and he sent in a perfect pass, which Karapialis easily controlled and shot into the far corner.

Olympiakos had another decent chance in the 16th minute, but it wasn't until time was winding down in the first half that things got ugly for current Cup holders Panionios.

Ivic got his first goal when he blasted in a shot from an Alexios Alexandris rebound in the 42nd minute and Djordjevic made in 3-0 just before the halftime whistle when Sinica Gogic fed Djordjevic, who put him through.

Ivic again scored in the 49th minute before helping Karapialis notch his second of the game in the 73rd minute.

The one great chance for Panionios came in the 62nd minute when Mark Robins was able to get a strong head

on the ball, but Olympiakos goalkeeper Dimitrios Eleftheropoulos stayed cool and the chance was lost.

Bajevic was happy with game, noting that Panionios played an open game, as he expected, and his team was able to take advantage of that.

Panionios coach Ronnie Whelan on the other hand compared the game to that between men playing against boys.

OLYMPIAKOS: Eleftheropoulos (gk); Mavrogenidis; Anatolakis; Karataidis; Djordjevic; Niniadis; Poursanidis (Antzas, 77); Alexandris

(Giannakopoulos, 68); Karapialis; Gogic (De Souza, 83); Ivic.

PANIONIOS: Strakosha (gk); Gazis; Ioannidis; Bougas; Robins; Haylock (Goups, 46); Bakeroot; Kafalis; Roberts; Markesinis (Sapountzis, 46); (Zarras, 64); Disdale.

ETHNIKOS ASTERAS STUNS PAOK

Giorgos Kogioglou scored the only goal of the game, in the 75th minute, as Ethnikos Asteras stunned PAOK, 1-0, at Kesariani Stadium.

Kogioglou was in the right place at the right time as teammate Davor Djakovlevic made the initial shot but PAOK goalkeeper Nikos Michopoulos was able to palm it away but was left stranded as Kogioglou came flying in to collect the loose ball and tuck it away.

PAOK did have the better of the chances in the game but Ethnikos Asteras keeper Vangelis Hosadas didn't have to make too many stops as the defence and poor marksmanship from PAOK made things easy for him. The best save came in the 16th minute after Percy Olivares fed Pantelis Kafes.

PAOK had two solid chances in the first half but Aris Tsalikis was able to stop Pantelis Konstantinidis in the 29th minute with strong defense and Kafes headed a cross from Bozidar Bandovic out of play in the 39th minute.

Zisis Vrisas had a header in the 64th minute and Paul Cominges blasted wide in the 77th minute but no one was able to finish meaningfully.

The absence of Kostas Frantzeskos may have been one of the reasons for PAOK's ineffectiveness in front of goal but bottom line in any game you must finish off chances or risk losing the points. PAOK learnt the lesson the hard way but their season seems to be still on track. Only time will tell.

ETHNIKOS ASTERAS: Hosadas (gk); Kontopoulos (Samaras, 89); Frontzos; Pavlovic; Lagos; Stamatoukos; Tsalikis; Xanthis; Basinas; Jakovlevic (Zacharopoulos, 83); Dragac (Kogidglou, 68).

PAOK: Mihopoulos (gk); Bandovic; Olivares; Zafeiriou; Vrisas; Konstantinidis; Koulakiotis; Katsambis; Taccola (Kapetanopoulos, 60); Kafes (Krismarevic, 71); Maheridis (Comingez, 58).

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ITALY

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SERIE A... JUVE BEATEN IN TURIN

Daniele Berretta's early goal lifted Cagliari to a 1-0 upset Sunday of Juventus, breaking the Turin club's five-game unbeaten streak and dashing any lingering hopes of a third straight Serie A title.

Juventus, eliminated from the Italian Cup on Tuesday, saw its record fall to 7-6-6, putting it in seventh place and 14 points off the league lead.

"All we can do is try to play a little better and try to climb a few spots in the standings," Juventus coach Marcello Lippi said. "My players don't like to lose, but the truth is this was an important game and we were flat at the start."

Berretta, a midfielder hit the target in the 17th minute, firing in a cross from Uruguay's Fabian O'Neill, and Juventus never recovered on a day that saw the league's weak teams give the top clubs plenty of trouble.

AC Parma dropped to fourth place after salvaging a 2-2 draw against Venezia thanks to Enrico Chiesa's goal with five minutes left; AS Roma was jeered off the field by many of the 40,000 fans at Olympic Stadium after last-place Empoli forged a 1-1 draw on a goal in injury time; and Internazionale of Milan, without injured strikers Ronaldo and Ivan Zamorano, played a dull 0-0 tie at Piacenza.

AC Milan also struggled against low-ranked Salernitana, but did manage to rally from a goal down to win 3-2 on German striker Oliver Bierhoff's second goal of the game.

Only two top clubs won impressively — league leader Fiorentina and second-place Lazio.

A pair of defenders scored rare goals three minutes apart in the first half and Argentine star Gabriel

Batistuta added his league-high 18th goal to lead Fiorentina past Vicenza 2-0 for its 10th victory in as many home games.

Six-year veteran Giulio Falcone hit his first career goal in the 36th minute and Moreno Torricelli followed shortly with his second tally in 171 Serie A games.

Lazio beat host Bari 3-1 to equal a franchise record, set in 1973, by winning its eighth consecutive league game.

Newly acquired Attilio Lombardo slotted the ball into an empty net for Lazio's opener, and Italy striker Christian Vieri added two goals, bringing his total to five in five games since he returned from a long layoff with a knee injury.

Seeking its first league title in 30 years, Fiorentina improved to 13-2-4 overall for 41 points, still three clear of Lazio. Milan is next with 36 points, followed by Parma (34), Inter (31), Roma (28) and Juventus (27).

Also on Sunday, Perugia beat Sampdoria 2-0.

At Cagliari, Juventus rarely threatened to score and stayed in the game only because its goalkeeper, Angelo Peruzzi, made a spectacular diving save in the 59th minute on Roberto Muzzi's penalty kick.

"We have had to battle all season," Lippi said. "It's been four or five Sundays in a row that we have been outplayed early and fallen behind."

While it is still alive in the Champions Cup, Juventus has had a season to forget otherwise.

The club has been dogged by a prosecutor's investigation of doping allegations, lost star striker Alessandro Del Piero for the season with knee ligament damage, and Lippi announced he'll leave the club in June.

Cagliari, 11th in the 18-team standings.



Despite the acquisition of French star Thierry Henry (above), Juve were humbled 1-0 at home by Cagliari.

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

Parma2 Venezia2

At Parma, Chiesa slotted in a low shot from close for the hosts who have gone three games without a victory.

Italy midfielder Dino Baggio headed in Argentine Juan Sebastian Veron's cross to give Parma a 1-0 lead after 16 minutes. But Venezia struck back with goals from Filippo Maniero in the 45th and 52nd.

Roma1 Empoli1

In Rome, where Roma had outscored its opponents by a combined 24-6 entering the game, striker Raffaele Cerbone a 30-year-old veteran of Italy's minor leagues making his Serie A debut knocked in the equalising goal.

Roma had gone ahead in the 55th minute with Brazilian striker Paulo Sergio's seventh goal.

Empoli is winless in eight games.

Piacenza0 Inter0

At Piacenza, the hosts took a point in the battle to avoid relegation. Inter needed a win to stay in the title hunt.

Milan3 Salernitana2

In Milan, Bierhoff scored off headers in the second and 60th minutes and provided the pass for Liberian striker George Weah's goal in the 25th.

Salernitana took a short-lived 2-1 lead when Federico Giampaolo put in a rebound in the sixth minute and defender Alessandro Del Grosso scored his first Serie A goal in the 14th minute with a 30-metre lob.

Fiorentina3 Vicenza0

At Florence, Falcone and Torricelli starred and Batistuta curled in a superb free kick from 25 metres with eight minutes left.

Lazio3 Bari1

In Bari, where the home club had been unbeaten, Lombardo took advantage when keeper Francesco Mancini strayed off his line and scored in the 21st minute for Lazio. Vieri hit the target on 38th and 86th.

Danish midfielder Peter Knudsen scored for Bari.

Perugia2 Sampdoria0

At Perugia, Ecuadorian striker Juan Kaviedes scored for the second game in a row, in the 20th minute, and defender Salvatore Matrecano doubled the lead five minutes later.

Bologna0 Udinese2

Top Four

Fiorentina	41
Lazio	38
Milan	36
Parma	34

Bottom Four

Salernitana	16
Vicenza	16
Sampdoria	16
Empoli	15



Christian Vieri (above) scored twice for Lazio in their 3-1 win in Bari.



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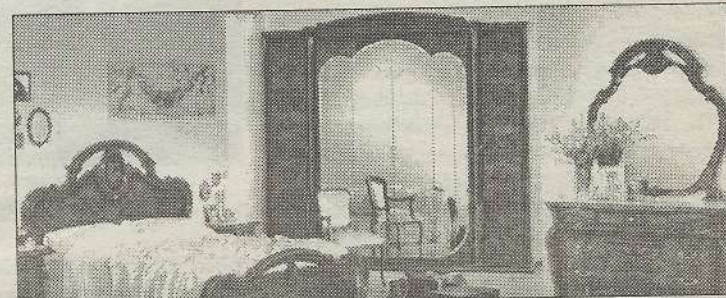
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EUROPE

Daniel Giorlando

BIENNIAL WORLD CUP REJECTED

The executive committee of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) has rejected proposals for a biennial World Cup, saying it believed holding the prestigious tournament more regularly would devalue it.

"The committee was unanimous there are no positive elements to be discovered in this proposal for European football, nor for football in general nor for the World Cup," German secretary general of UEFA Gerhard Aigner told a press conference in Cape Town.

He added that UEFA would invite the originator of the plan, FIFA president Sepp Blatter, to a meeting so he could explain his idea in greater detail.

Aigner was speaking after the UEFA executive had held its first ever meeting on African soil, timed to coincide with the start of the under-17 Meridian Cup, which pits four African under-17 teams against four teams from Europe.

Asked what was UEFA's main objection to Blatter's plan, Aigner said: "There are too many reasons to be elaborated on, but one is that the World Cup would be devalued if it was held every two years."

A trial plan to introduce a second referee has been backed by UEFA's executive committee, pending a decision by the International Board.

The executive committee rubber stamped the plan suggested by the UEFA referees' committee although only the International Board has the power to change rules.

The subject will be tackled at the next meeting of the Board in Wales in February and, if it is approved, a trial could take place very quickly.

The meeting also confirmed that Israel will stage the European under-16 championships in 2000 and Denmark in 2002. Norway will host the European under-18 tournament in 2002.

The meeting was held in South Africa following the Meridian accord between UEFA and the Confederation of African Football.

The next UEFA executive summit will be in Tel Aviv, Israel on April 22 and 23.

FIFA is to issue guidelines to countries bidding for the 2006 World Cup to ensure no unreasonable inducements are made to its 24-strong executive committee which will decide the destiny of the tournament.

The move comes in the wake of the bribery scandal that has brought shame to the Olympic movement.

Keith Cooper, spokesman for world soccer's governing body, said correspondence would be sent to all eight World Cup 2006 candidates, setting out recommendations for the final year of campaigning ahead of the vote in March 2000.

The guidelines were drawn up last year after complaints about the excessive amount of hospitality offered by some countries bidding for the 2002 World Cup. Said Cooper:

"The decision was taken in May but as it has turned out the distribution of these guidelines has proved very timely."

He said failure to accept the recommendations could result in candidates being barred from the bidding campaign.

Brazil and France are still the teams to beat in world soccer, according to official FIFA rankings released under a new system of calculation.

Brazil are still top dogs with 829 points with their World Cup final conquerors France in second spot with 787. Croatia, who finished third in the World Cup, share third spot with Italy while another traditional force in world football, Germany, dropped to fifth.

The new system incorporates weighting factors after criticism that relatively meaningless friendly matches were being given too much importance.

Competitive matches now carry more weight and regional factors have also been introduced to insure that the strength of a soccer region is taken into account.

There are eight European teams and two Latin American teams in the top 10.

A Czech player who attempted

to bribe a Hungarian opponent has been banned from European matches until December 31, UEFA's disciplinary committee announced.

Pavel Mraz, who was playing for Sliema Wanderers of Malta at the time but has since been transferred to Valletta, was said to be "devastated" by UEFA's ruling.

Valletta will appeal against the ruling early next month.

The incident happened when Sliema played Hungarians Diosgyori in the Intertoto Cup on June 29.

UEFA said Mraz attempted to bribe the Hungarian team's goalkeeper --

Slovakian Julius Nota -- before the second leg of their qualifying round match.

Diosgyori had won the first leg 2-0 and also won the second leg 3-2 in Malta to advance 5-2 on aggregate. Nota reported to his manager that Mraz had offered him money to throw the game.

In a statement UEFA said: "Following a thorough examination, which involved statements given by several people...UEFA has decided upon a sanction of this severity in view of the seriousness of the breach of the principles of loyalty, integrity and sporting convictions."

Valletta president Joe Caruana Curran said: "He is devastated by the decision and we do not think he deserved to get such a hefty ban."

The Maltese Football Association now intend to hold their own inquiry into the case, but that will not take place until the result of Valletta's appeal to UEFA is known.

Former VfB Stuttgart coach Winfried Schafer said he was disappointed with Bulgarian star Krassimir Balakov after he made unflattering comments about Schafer at Stuttgart's winter training camp in Portugal.

Balakov, who appeared in two World Cup finals inspiring Bulgaria to the 1994 semi-finals, laid the blame for Stuttgart's poor form firmly on Schafer's shoulders.

"Whatever could have gone wrong for us in the last six months has. Poor morale, a breakdown of relationships between the players. All that has to do with poor people management," 32-year-old Balakov said.

"Since Rainer Adrion took over as coach from Schafer everything has changed. Adrion is honest, he's a simple person," he added.

Schafer, who left Stuttgart in December after less than six months in the job because of a rebellion by top players like Balakov and German international Fredi Bobic, shot back at his adversary in a Cologne newspaper.

"I don't even know if Balakov has the necessary intelligence to make judgements about my people management," Schafer said.

Stuttgart, whose fans never took to Schafer because he had previously coached Karlsruhe, is eighth in the Bundesliga and has already been knocked out of both the UEFA Cup and German Cup.

German national coach Erich Ribbeck named a streamlined squad for the trip to the US for two friendly fixtures next month, with only four defenders.

The Germans will play the US in Jacksonville, Florida on February 6th and then Colombia in Miami three days later.

Lothar Matthaus, Markus Babel, Marko Rehmer and Christian Worns are the only full time defenders to be nominated, with Worns only being made available by French side Paris Saint Germain for the second game.

VALLADOLID LOSES FIGHT AGAINST SPANISH FEDERATION

French legend Michel Platini feels that disgraced tycoon Bernard Tapie should be allowed to return to football.

Platini was commenting on reports that Tapie was involved in a project to transform third division side Noisy-le-Sec, based in the Paris suburbs, into a first division team playing their home games at the Stade de France.

Tapie transformed Olympique Marseille from a relatively modest club to European champions in 1993 thanks to some adventurous deals in the transfer market.

But match-fixing revelations led to the club being stripped of the European crown and Tapie spending a spell in prison. He has been a football outcast ever since.

But Platini, now working as a special adviser to FIFA President Sepp Blatter, said: "He (Tapie) has the right to return to football."

Tapie is only one of many parties involved in the Noisy-Le-Sec project which is still only at a discussion stage.

The Paris suburbs have a reputation for social exclusion but are a renowned breeding ground for French football talent including Arsenal striker Nicolas Anelka and French World Cup star Thierry Henry.

Noisy-Le-Sec consists almost exclusively of players of Arab or African origin.

Four Germans will go on trial in April for incidents relating to an attack on French police officer Daniel Nivel during the World Cup, it was revealed.

The four unnamed defendants, aged between 23 and 30, are in custody and have been accused of attempted murder and an aggravated breach of the peace.

Nivel was in a coma for six weeks after the incident in the French town of Lens on the day of the match between Germany and Yugoslavia.

The trial could last until September. Two men were also arrested in France.

With a handful of league games to go, bottom-of-the-table Toulouse has turned to former coach Alain Giresse to save it from what appears to be certain relegation.

Giresse, called back after Toulouse was knocked out of the opening round of the French Cup by amateurs Jura Sud, has launched an emergency plan to save the southern side which begins what looks like a mission impossible against Metz.

"We need shock therapy and Giresse is the man who can save us," club vice-president Jacques Rubio says.

"He was without a contract and we convinced him to come back. He agreed and I think he embodies our last throw of the dice."

"The first thing to do is to understand why things went wrong. This done, I will make the team work my own way. I know what I have to do to," Giresse said.

Giresse, 46, who replaced Guy Lacombe, can rely on his personal experience gained in 47 appearances for France and a previous spell at Toulouse to help him.

Originally appointed Toulouse coach in 1995, he helped the team win promotion back to the first division in 1997 before moving to Paris St Germain last year.

Attacking midfielder Wagneau Eloi has signed for French first division side Monaco, according to the player's club French champions Lens.

There are no details of the contract signed by the Haiti-born player, who has scored seven goals this season.

Monaco last week sold striker Thierry Henry to Italian champions Juventus while another Lens player, Cameroon international Marc-Vivien Foe, looks set to join English Premier League side West Ham United.

Sporting Lisbon has asked fans to wear mourning clothes at their next home match in protest at a string of refereeing decisions the club claims have ruined their championship hopes.

The club flag will be flown at half-mast and officials will don black armbands for the game against Academica.

Sporting said poor refereeing had cost them at least 10 points. At present, they are nine points behind leaders Porto.

The Lisbon club have objected to match officials before. Earlier this season they offered to pay for foreign referees at their matches.

The latest complaint followed an admission by referee Jorge Coroado, in charge of the 2-2 draw at Chaves at the weekend, that his mistakes probably cost Sporting victory.

Sporting had a goal disallowed and two penalty appeals refused.

Valladolid have lost their fight against a Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) decision that they must forfeit a league victory over Real Betis.

First division Valladolid were punished for briefly fielding five non-European Union players, one more than the rules allow, in their match against Betis on January 10.

The RFEF competitions committee turned what was a 2-1 home victory

for Valladolid into a 3-0 defeat.

Valladolid asked the RFEF appeals committee to overturn the decision but their appeal was rejected.

Problems arose for Valladolid in the game against Betis when coach Sergio Kresic substituted Colombian midfielder Harold Lozano for the injured Jose Luis Santamaria.

That meant they went over the limit for non-EU players on the pitch. Kresic realised his mistake six minutes later and sent on Spaniard Alberto Lopez to replace Argentine Diego Klimowicz.

Four similar transgressions since 1991 have not incurred any penalties except small fines against the coaches concerned.

Benfica winger Hugo Porfirio has been loaned to struggling English premier league side Nottingham Forest for the rest of the season.

The Lisbon club said Forest had an option to buy the player at the end of the season. Porfirio, who used to play for West Ham, has been out of favour with Benfica's Scottish coach Graeme Souness.

The biennial Meridian Cup tournament for leading African and European junior national teams has kicked off in Cape Town, South Africa with Nigeria defending a title won in Portugal.

MERIDIAN CUP DRAW

Group A

Jan 28 - South Africa vs. Republic of Ireland, Egypt vs. Spain
Jan 30 - South Africa vs. Egypt, Republic of Ireland vs. Spain
Feb 1 - South Africa vs. Spain, Egypt vs. Republic of Ireland

Group B

Jan 28 - Nigeria vs. Italy, Ghana vs. Portugal
Jan 30 - Ghana vs. Nigeria, Italy vs. Portugal
Feb 1 - Ghana vs. Italy, Nigeria vs. Portugal

Semifinals

Feb 4 - Winners A v runners-up B, winners B v runners-up A

Finals

Feb 7 - Final, third-place playoff

Compiled by

EUROPE

Soccer Weekly

MARSEILLE MASSACRE

Bordeaux struck four goals in an amazing first half as it pounded Marseille 4-1 in Friday's contest between France's runaway championship chasers.

Bordeaux striker Silvain Wiltord began the rout in the 14th minute, heading in from point blank range after a superb overhead kick from strike partner Lilian Laslandes.

Johan Micoud made it 2-0 three minutes later, sliding the ball past Marseille goalkeeper Stephane Porato after a fine solo run.

That wasn't the end of the agony for Rolland Courbis' team.

Porato was left stunned in the 20th minute when Laslandes got ahead of Marseille fullback William Gallas to smash the ball into the roof of the net.

Marseille was resigned to its second league defeat of the season when Wiltord struck his 14th league goal of the season.

Ali Benarbia, a constant thorn in Marseille's side, crossed from the left, Cyril Domoraud completely mis-cued and Wiltord could hardly believe his luck as he headed into an empty net.

Laslandes should have made it five just before half-time but blazed over with only Porato to beat.

Christophe Dugarry scored a second half consolation goal for the visitors.

Renns continued its surprise challenge for a European Champions League spot thanks to Shabani Nonda's 10th goal of the season.

The 21-year-old Burundi-born striker scored after Bastia had two players sent off in the first half.

Wealthy Paris Saint-Germain continued its shock slide toward the relegation zone with a 2-1 defeat at Monaco.

A late Aliou Cisse own goal secured the points.

PSG's new signing Bruno Rodriguez equalized Victor Ikpeba's early goal with a brilliant 28th-minute strike.

Dutch club Feyenoord is banning its own fans from European road games for the next 18 months, the Dutch news agency reported.

The decision to prevent foreign clubs from selling tickets to supporters of the Rotterdam club follows



Monaco's Lefebvre tries to kick the ball only to find the hand off PSG's Cisse in the way

serious disturbances in the German town of Leverkusen after Saturday's friendly there.

"These so-called supporters, with their misconduct on Saturday ... have once again stained our name," ANP quoted Feyenoord chairman Jorien van den Herik as saying.

"I cannot and will not tolerate that. The survival of Feyenoord at the top of European football is in danger because of this," he added.

The move, which is to be confirmed this week with UEFA, was supported by Feyenoord's supporters' association.

"The chairman must take action. He's done that loud and clear with this move. I understand that and find it truly justified. Van der Herik can not do anything else. He has no other weapons," Willem Veenman told ANP.

GENK LEADS IN BELGIUM

A change of boots and a last-minute winner helped a 10-man Genk leapfrog over Club Bruges to lead the Belgian first division by one point.

Michael Okoth Origi pounced in injury time to steal victory for the new leaders over a hard-working Ghent who had much the better of the match, played on a frozen pitch.

The home side changed boots at halftime and, despite having Ngoy Nsumba sent off midway through the second half, snatched the points which ended Ghent's 10-match unbeaten run.

Club Bruges kept up the pressure at the top with a 2-0 win over Anderlecht on Friday in a match disrupted by crowd trouble.

Angry Anderlecht fans halted the game for more than 10 minutes in the second half, ripping up plastic seats and hurling them on to the pitch.

On Saturday the Bruges mayor estimated the damage at over one million Belgian francs (\$282,000) and vowed to fight to keep Anderlecht supporters away from the stadium in future.

Bruges' Jan Breydel stadium has just been renovated in preparation for the Euro 2000 championship.

In the battle for UEFA Cup places, third-placed Excelsior Mouscron trounced Lokeren, one place below them in the table, 5-1 despite going behind to a header from Jan Koeller, who took his tally for the season to 15.

There are no league games next weekend as the national side play Cyprus in a friendly.

Daniel Batista scored one goal and Demis Nicolaidis added another on Sunday as AEK Athens beat league-leader Olympiakos Piraeus 2-0 at home.

Despite the loss, Olympiakos retained first place in the Greek first division league. But its six-point lead over Panathinaikos Athens was trimmed to three.

The game was marred by violence at the end of the match as angry Olympiakos fans ripped up plastic seats, hurled them at riot police on the field and set fire to the stands.

Clashes also broke out before the game when AEK supporters attacked rival fans and clashed with police. At least three people were arrested, but no serious injuries were reported.

Halfway through the season, Olympiakos has 40 points.

Panathinaikos, which beat OFI Crete 1-0 at home, follows in second place with 37 points, and AEK is in third with 36.

Playing before 30,000 spectators, AEK controlled play throughout the game to force the defending champion to its third loss of the season.

A major contributor to AEK's victory was its keeper Ilias Atmatzidis who made at least four crucial saves during the match.

AEK took the lead with a perfect header by Batista off a center from Michalis Kasapis in the 11th minute.

Olympiakos went on the attack after the goal, but were unable to score.

Seconds before the end of the first half, Nicolaidis scored his team's second goal with a shot from the edge of the box.

Nicolaidis now tops the list of Greek first division scorers with 14 goals.

Olympiakos became more aggressive after the rest period, but Atmatzidis on the one hand, and AEK's tight pressing on the other, stopped the visitors from scoring.

Olympiakos' goalkeeper Dimitris Eleftheropoulos averted a third goal when he flew to save a free kick by Kasapis as the ball was going into his upper left corner.

Polish striker Krzysztof Warzycha's first-half goal was all Panathinaikos needed to beat OFI Crete 1-0 and remain on course for the title.

The game was played in the southern town of Argos after Panathinaikos was punished for crowd violence in a match against Olympiakos and ordered to play two home games away.

The two teams measured each other at midfield for the first 20 minutes of the game.

One minute later, Warzycha received a pass in OFI's area and netted the game's only goal.

OFI's goalie Aria Begaj made a key save on a shot by Panathinaikos' Brazilian striker Mauro Da Silva in the 26th.

In the 41st, it was Antonis Nikopolidis' turn to make a spectacular save on a shot by Iordanidis.

OFI was more active in the second half, but Panathinaikos' defence resisted well.

More Greek news on pages 22-23.

ENGLAND STAR A REAL BOOST FOR MADRID

Liverpool and England midfielder Steve McManaman agreed to join European Cup holders Real Madrid on Friday.

A statement issued by the player's agents said McManaman would sign a five-year contract with Real to start on July 1, the day after his current contract with the English premier league club expires.

McManaman, 26, will be a free agent under the Bosman ruling so Liverpool will receive no transfer fee or compensation. He still faces a medical with the Spanish club.

"I am extremely sad to be leaving Liverpool," he said.

"However, the opportunity to be playing football for

Real Madrid, the current European and world champions, is too good to turn down and it helps me further my ambition to test myself in another top European League."

Part of England's 1998 World Cup squad, he played just 18 minutes against Colombia before suffering an Achilles tendon injury which has troubled him since. He has managed just 40 minutes of first team football since November 7.

The injury has meant he has played only 12 games all season and scored just one goal.

He played in a reserve team match in midweek but was again troubled by his ankle. His first team return was again put on hold.

McManaman has played more than 350 times for Liverpool and has won more than 20 England caps.

The signing will be a major coup for Real. Spanish rivals Barcelona and Italian club Juventus have both been linked with the player.

Valencia moved to the top of the Spanish first division with an impressive 2-1 away victory over Atletico Madrid.

First half goals from Argentine sharp-shooter Claudio Lopez and Miguel Angel Angulo sealed victory for Valencia and they went close to adding to their tally several times in the second half.

Valencia, who last won the league title in 1971, have 36 points from 20 games.

"We took account of all the injury problems of Atletico, got a quick goal and that made them nervous," Valencia coach Claudio Rainieri said.

"I have the feeling that this season could still be Valencia's."

Rainieri refused to comment on speculation that he might leave Valencia at the end of the season and return to his native Italy because his family has struggled to settle in Spain.

Atletico coach Arrigo Sacchi commended his compatriot's tactics which brought them their fourth away win of the season.

"Valencia are a team who defend well and (in the second half) they were playing with eight defenders, nine if you include the goalkeeper," Sacchi said. "We played well but perhaps did not make the most of our opportunities."

Mallorca had a hard-fought 1-0 home win over Salamanca, winning the scrappy contest thanks to a 53rd-minute header from Dani Garcia.

The Balearic island side are second with 35 points.

"It was not a great game. We did not play well, made a lot of errors and did not come out of the game with much merit but the important thing was the three points," coach Hector Cuper said.

Real Madrid got back to winning ways after their 4-0 defeat at Deportivo Coruna last weekend but it was not a great performance from the European champions at Villarreal, despite their 2-0 win.

The home side were down to 10 men after Oscar Tellez got his second yellow card before Real Madrid could make the breakthrough.

Fernando Morientes scored both goals against Villarreal in their 2-0 Spanish Cup victory nine days ago and repeated the feat on Saturday.

A spectacular overhead bicycle kick after 73 minutes put Madrid ahead and Morientes got his second two minutes into injury time, heading home a Roberto Carlos shot which cannoned off the crossbar.

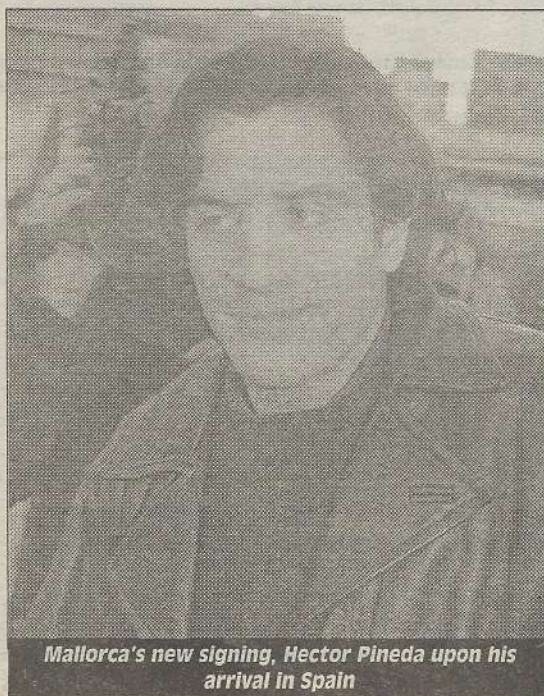
Real Betis beat Alaves 1-0 and the Seville side's Brazilian midfielder Denilson, the world's most expen-



Valencia's Lopez in control of the ball being harrassed by Atletico's Serena

sive player, played the entire game after being dropped the previous week.

Romanian international Iulian Filipescu scored his first goal for Betis after moving from Turkish club Galatasaray two weeks ago.



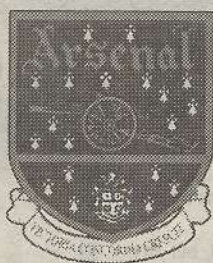
Mallorca's new signing, Hector Pineda upon his arrival in Spain

Compiled by

UK

Soccer Weekly

ARSENAL INFO



GROUND CAPACITY:	38,500
RECORD ATTENDANCE:	73,295 v Sunderland Div 1, 9 March 1935
YEAR FORMED:	1886, (Turned Professional 1891)
CLUB NICKNAME:	The Gunners
PREVIOUS NAMES:	1886, Dial Square; 1886-91, Royal Arsenal; 1891-1914, Woolwich Arsenal
PREVIOUS GROUNDS:	1886-87, Plumstead Common; 1887-88, Sportsman Ground; 1888-90, Manor Ground; 1890-93, Invicta Ground; 1893-1913, Manor Ground; 1913, Highbury
RECORD LEAGUE VICTORY:	12-0 v Loughborough Town, Division 2, 12 March 1900
RECORD CUP VICTORY:	11-1 v Darwen, FA Cup, 3rd Round, 9 January 1932
RECORD DEFEAT:	0-8 v Loughborough Town, Division 2, 12 December 1896
MOST LEAGUE POINTS:	(2 for a win) 66, Division 1, 1930-31
MOST LEAGUE POINTS:	(3 for a win) 83, Division 1, 1990-91
MOST LEAGUE GOALS:	127, Division 1, 1930-31
HIGHEST LEAGUE SCORER IN SEASON:	Ted Drake, 42, 1934-35
MOST LEAGUE GOALS IN TOTAL:	Ian Wright, 185, 1991-98
MOST LEAGUE APPEARANCES:	David O'Leary, 558, 1975-93
LEAGUE RECORD:	1893 Elected to Division 2; 1904-13 Division 1; 1913-19 Division 2; 1919-92 Division 1; 1992 - FA Premier League
LEAGUE DIV 1 CHAMPIONS:	1930-31, 1932-33, 1933-34, 1934-35, 1937-38, 1947-48, 1952-53, 1970-71, 1988-89, 1990-91
LEAGUE DIV 1 RUNNERS-UP:	1925-26, 1931-32, 1972-73
LEAGUE DIV 2 CHAMPIONS:	N/A
LEAGUE DIV 2 RUNNERS-UP:	1903-04
FA CUP WINNERS:	1930, 1936, 1950, 1971, 1979, 1993, 1998
FA CUP RUNNERS-UP:	1927, 1932, 1952, 1972, 1978, 1980
LEAGUE CUP WINNERS:	1987, 1993
LEAGUE CUP RUNNERS-UP:	1968, 1969, 1988
EUROPEAN FAIRS CUP WINNERS:	1970
EUROPEAN CUP WINNERS' CUP WINNERS:	1994



Ian Wright

I WAS A DISASTER
SAYS GOLDY TO FANS

Crystal Palace chairman Mark Goldberg has admitted to 600 concerned fans: 'I was a sucker, I have made a mistake.'

In a 30-minute address to a special meeting of the Palace Independent Supporters' Association Goldberg, who bought the club for £22.8 million in August, said the first six months of his chairmanship with Terry Venables as manager had been 'a disaster'.

But he pledged to learn from his early errors. He criticised a number of players for a lack of commitment and said he and acting manager Steve Coppell had agreed to sell off several players to cut the club's wage bill.

'I want to instil discipline and dedication into this club,' said Goldberg. 'I only want players who are prepared to die for the cause.'

'We're putting a new level of energy into fitness and conditioning at the club.'

PISA chairman Andy Gilbert said afterwards: 'Before the meeting, we were concerned about honesty and openness from Mark but I think we got a lot of that. Whether or not he's the right man for the job in the long run, we don't know. Let's hope he is.'

Blackburn Rovers' latest recruit Jason McAteer admitted leaving Liverpool was the hardest decision he had ever had to make.

The Liverpool-born midfielder signed for Rovers

in a four million pounds move after agreeing a contract which will keep him at Ewood Park until June 2003.

But McAteer revealed he had tears in his eyes when he left Liverpool's training ground for the last time.

'It was a big decision. It wasn't something where I woke up and thought I am leaving Liverpool today. But since Paul Ince arrived and Jamie Redknapp came on my chances have got less and less.'

The Republic of Ireland international revealed the lure of a regular game in his favoured central mid-field role was a big reason behind his move. He played on the right for much of his time at Liverpool.

McAteer agreed to join Blackburn despite turning them down when he moved to Anfield three years ago.

'At that time I was at Bolton,' he said. 'Blackburn and Liverpool came in for me and being a big Reds (Liverpool) fan moving to Liverpool was something I felt I had to do.'

'If I hadn't done it I would have regretted it for the rest of my life.'

Kidd said he was delighted to have captured McAteer's signature.

'To get a talent like Jason is great for Rovers. When he left Liverpool I knew it would take a lot to get him here.'

TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP

FOURTH ROUND DRAW

Ayr v Brechin or Albion
Clydebank or Ross County v Queens Park or
Dundee Utd
Motherwell v Hibernian or Stirling
Greenock Morton v Clyde
St Mirren or Hamilton v Rangers
Stranraer v Falkirk
Livingston v St Johnstone
Celtic v Dunfermline

Ties to be played weekend of 13/14 February

THIRD ROUND
REPLAYS

Tonight Tuesday 2nd February
Albion Rovers v Brechin City

7:30pm
Stirling v Hibernian
7:45pm
Hamilton v St Mirren
7:45pm

WENGER'S POACHING ANGERS HOULLIER

Gerard Houllier has blasted fellow French manager Arsene Wenger over the manner in which the Arsenal boss signed 15-year-old Jeremie Aliadiere from France's national training centre.

Wenger has been criticised in France for snapping up the promising teenager, and Houllier said: 'I'm the first person to be shocked by Jeremie's departure and the first to be alarmed by the problems it will cause.'

The deal — which is equivalent to a club like Monaco or Marseille signing up the best young talents at the FA School of Excellence — has infuriated football experts in France since its completion.

Aliadiere will join Arsenal's youth academy as a scholar at the beginning of next season. An Arsenal spokesman would not disclose the fee and length of contract.

The Liverpool manager added: 'I was involved in setting up the French FA scheme, and I can't see myself going against it.'

'I also made an undertaking together with Liverpool's directors not to entice any young French players while they were still at the training centre. I'm amazed some people think that is my aim — they can't know me at all well.'

Know the French FA know how Australia feels when English clubs like Leeds Utd sign young players and force them into making decisions on their international futures.

Motherwell chief executive Pat Nevin believes the capture of John Spencer on a permanent basis will lift the gloom that had descended over Fir Park.

The ex-Tranmere and Chelsea man revealed a slight increase in Motherwell's bid had secured the player for manager Billy Davies.

'This is good news all round, good for him and us because we wanted him and he likes it here, while we have also done a deal which Everton are happy with for a player who was not in their plans.'

'There is no doubt about John's ability. He has made a real difference for us on and off the field, the fans and players were very upset when it looked like he wouldn't be joining us.'

'There was a real gloom about the place because he is such a popular guy, but happily a transfer has now been agreed and the signing is on which is superb for us.'

'Buying John is a huge commitment for us as a club, but we know his quality as a player and what he brings to Motherwell as a whole so had no hesitation in agreeing the deal.'

Over 36,000 St James' Park fans paid homage to Peter Beardsley's benefit match which will land the former Toon idol a cool £250,000.

The 38-year-old, who now plays for Hartlepool, was joined by a host of former team-mates including Chris Waddle, Andy Cole and Paul Gascoigne.



Kevin Keegan ... back at Newcastle for the first time in two years.

Also on parade were past managers Kenny Dalglish and Kevin Keegan, who was given rapturous applause after returning to the ground for the first time since his departure as manager two years ago.

Beardsley said: 'Both sets of fans have been great to me. I will remember this night for as long as I live. To be honoured at any time is smashing, but to be honoured by your own Geordie folk is something very, very special.'

Celtic ran out winners courtesy of an own-goal from Blackburn defender Darren Peacock, before Lubomir Moravcik and Mark Burchill made it 3-0. But Beardo inevitably had the last say scoring from the spot.

The feud between pretty boy Spurs man David Ginola and hard-man coach Joe Kinnear of Wimbledon blew up again in the midweek Cup match.

As Ginola limped away, the Dons boss gleefully and sneeringly directed a derogatory four-letter insult at the player's back.

Kinnear laughingly claimed he had asked Ginola: 'How's your hammy?' and attempted to make light of the issue later by adding: 'I could imagine what he said back but I didn't hear it. There's been a lot of banter going on week-in, week-out. That's part and parcel of the game.'

But the reality was that his words were designed only to wind up the ever-sensitive Ginola.

Kinnear clearly represents the 'battlers' of English football, in diametric contrast to Ginola, the stylish and well-paid Frenchman with the silky skills.

Can't wait for the replay.

Compiled by

UK

Soccer Weekly

HEARTS STAR FEARS SPANISH ARMY, JACKSON IN CHINA

Scottish premier league club Hearts may lose 20-year-old winger Juan Jose Carricondo to the Spanish army.

Carricondo, who joined Hearts from Barcelona last October, has been told by the Spanish military that he must return home to begin his national service.

The player, known in Scottish football simply as "Juanjo," will face a year with the army unless his lawyers can persuade the Spanish authorities to revoke the call-up.

Hearts manager Jim Jefferies said: "I have spoken to the player's agent and given him a letter from the club for Juanjo's lawyer in Spain, saying he is now employed by us."

"I have been assured that will be the end of the matter. We invested money in the player and we don't want to lose him."

Juanjo, who began his career with Barcelona but never played in the first team, earned a two-year contract with Hearts three months ago after impressing in a trial period.

"I will fight this case as hard as I can and Hearts have given me their support," he said.

"I am trying to build a career with Hearts and a life in Scotland with my girlfriend. But my career is now in the hands of the Spanish government and I am worried."

Darren Jackson sealed a career-saving move to Chinese club Dalian Wanda thanks to some timely intervention from former Celtic general manager Jock Brown.

The 32-year-old underwent a medical in Shanghai before putting pen to paper on a contract believed to run for the next 18 months. While Jackson has succeeded in escaping to a country where he is most obviously wanted, Brown's help could rebound

on the former Celtic general manager if he ever makes an official return to the game.

He may have been acting with the best intentions, but any involvement in a transfer by a party who is not a FIFA licensed agent is frowned upon by the game's governing body and they have the power to act against anyone under their jurisdiction if a complaint is made.

Already this week, Bill McMurdo lodged a letter of protest with the SFA about the actions of Tommy McLean, claiming that former Dundee United manager had been active in introducing players to clubs with a view to transfer.

While one striker has departed, two others who have had their problems at Celtic recently are settling down to matters on the pitch.

A spokesman for the Parkhead club has confirmed that they had paid the £900,000 slice of Mark Viduka's transfer fee direct to Croatia Zagreb.

He said: "The money that was due to Croatia Zagreb has been paid by Celtic in full."

Zagreb have made a formal complaint to FIFA about Celtic's refusal to pay the full £3 million directly to them, but the Parkhead club are now confident that no action will be taken against them.

The Croatians claim that they have an agreement with the player where he waived any right to his 50 per cent of the fee, but Viduka's sudden disappearance and the subsequent dealings suggest that to be complete nonsense.

Viduka's former club, Melbourne Knights, will be paid the remaining £600,000 by Celtic in due course.

'CRAZY' CRAIG WILSON'S UK



Welcome to the Crazy Craig Wilson column. Flying the flag for the UK game. This week we get to the bottom of visiting other grounds.

"Going to the toilet at football is a great way of making friends" says Janet Williams. "As you sit on the loo you'll often hear 'Has anybody got any with?' Then the toilet paper will be thrown from cubicle to cubicle."

The North London writer and Cambridge United fan is Britain's foremost expert on the soccer dunny. Over the past five years, she's left a bum print on every loo seat in the Football League.

"At Macclesfield, as you sat and did your business, you discovered that the door would slowly open to reveal the entire away terrace."

"The door was just too far away to stick your leg out and shut it. Luckily the football was so good that nobody was looking in my direction."

"The next time I recruited a woman to stand guard for me. You had to go in pairs — which

was a great way to meet people."

It's pioneering work, and led Arena Magazine to nominate Williams as one of the two most powerful women in football — along with Stan Collymore's Mum.

Improvements in stadium facilities over the past few years have much to do with The Football Fans Guide, written by Williams with Victoria Bennett and James Hilton.

The standard text book for the away supporter, it provides maps and ticketing details, reviews the club shop, and comments on the state of the toilets, and the pie situation.

There are also tips on the best pubs, safety, and club fanzines and web-sites.

Though she has never had to take her own toilet paper ("But I know women who do"), and has so far avoided food poisoning, Williams has written off her Ford Fiesta and bought beer for every fanzine editor in the country.

"I was going out with someone who supported Huddersfield" she recalls.

"He and his mates went to watch them play Reading, and I decided to tag along. But not a single one of them had bothered to find out where the ground was. So they came off the motorway at the wrong junction in this big town, and they got lost. So I thought it would be brilliant to buy them all a book that told them how to get to grounds, where to park, where the pubs were etc. But when I looked there wasn't one, and I thought — what a gap in the market. The stuff these blokes wanted to know when they were on their way to London."

Williams worked closely with fans, football clubs and the Police. "I could not have done it without them" she says of the latter. "They have been absolutely vital. I can't understand how guides can come out without having spoken to them. There's one book going around which recommends a pub in Burnley that even Burnley fans won't go to. Pubs have to be recommended by the Police."

I asked whether big clubs had been more helpful than the smaller ones. Surely they would have well oiled publicity machines these days?

"It's a complete mixture" she replies. "Some of the little clubs can be very stropky, and some of the big clubs fantastic. One in particular was foul, and another asked me to pay for information which I later got for free from their ticket office."

There is no doubt that Williams has made a difference. "Well some pubs tell me to get out when I walk in. Others fall at my feet and tell me that takings have gone up 300%! I do get letters from people who tell me that they go to far more games now that they know it's safe to take kids."

But it's a multi-million pound business isn't it? "Oh it's not all hunky dory" she says. "At Aston Villa for instance — a very friendly club — the smell from the away end loos was awful. You didn't need directions. Every one knew where they were because they could smell them."

Any hidden gems? "Probably Torquay United. It's very easy to get to, easy to park. There's a good pub inside the ground where you can meet the players. After the game you go down to the seafront, have pizza, and stay overnight."

"But you can't beat Old Trafford for atmosphere — though it's sometimes better outside the ground than inside, and you hear fewer and fewer Manchester accents. But my heart would sink if you told me I had to go to Huddersfield again!"

And what about the new stadiums. Do they suffer from teething problems? Part of the culture of football is the pre-match drink says Williams, and many of the new out-of-town stadia do not have a boozer nearby — "It's certainly a problem, particularly at clubs like Bolton or Derby, which is built on the site of a toxic chemical dump."

"But overall clubs just need to improve their relations with fans. Communicate with them. There are clubs which think they are doing you a favour letting you in, and the toilets are proof."

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Compiled by

UK

Soccer Weekly

HODDLE'S LATEST PR DISASTER

He may have been a stylish player, but as a manager he is becoming increasingly weird.

Saturday's Times newspaper quoted Hoddle as saying he believed people were reincarnated and paid for their wrong doings in previous lives with mental and physical handicaps.

"You and I have been physically given two hands and two feet and half-decent brains. Some people have not been born like that for a reason. The karma is working from another lifetime. What you sow you reap," he was quoted as saying.

Speaking on BBC television Hoddle, a devout Christian, claimed he had been quoted out of context. "I can assure you that is not what I said and that is not what I mean," he said.

The comments, whatever he meant by them, sparked another round of Hoddle-bashing, a pastime becoming ever more popular with each new eccentricity of the manager who took over from Terry Venables after England reached the semi-finals of Euro 96.

Freda Murray, chairwoman of soccer's Disabled Supporters' Association, said she thought he should resign.

"It is disgusting for a man in his position to be talking like this," she said. "I take a boy in a wheelchair and a boy with Down's Syndrome to matches. What are they going to think?"

Radio phone-in shows were swamped with calls on the issue after Saturday's premier league programme with the vast majority saying Hoddle should resign or be sacked. Many Sunday newspapers also called for him to go.

However, with the Football Association in a state of flux as it prepares to replace chairman Keith Wiseman and chief executive Graham Kelly, who resigned in December, no official action is expected for a while.

Hoddle, a classy midfielder in his playing days, was warmly welcomed by fans in 1996 but the former Chelsea boss has since alienated millions.

His association with Eileen Drewery, a faith healer Hoddle has used since he was a teenager, provoked a storm of criticism. Her influence on the England team in the build-up to the World Cup last year raised eyebrows throughout the soccer world.

But he has stood behind her involvement in the squad and said last year that if the F.A. tried to forbid him from using her it would become "an issue."

He also defended his use of controversial vitamin injections, given to several of his players during France 98.

Despite going out to Argentina in the second round, England and Hoddle were given a heroes' welcome when they returned from France.

The coach took a certain amount of criticism for his tactics, notably his reluctance to use teenage striker Michael Owen until it was almost too late, but he still had the general sup-



Glenn Hoddle ... I've been misconstrued.

port of the fans and the media.

But Hoddle was vilified after the publication of his World Cup Diary, a book which revealed personal details about many players and officials.

His warts-and-all description of Paul Gascoigne's angry reaction to being left out of the squad led to accusations of betrayal.

The fact that he sold its serial rights for 250,000 pounds (\$411,700) to The Sun, a newspaper he had regularly vilified, also angered many.

Hoddle's relationship with his players was called into question again in October when he was reported to have rowed with captain Alan Shearer after England limped to a 3-0 victory over Luxembourg in a Euro 2000 qualifier.

Throughout this period, when England also lost to Sweden and were held to a goalless home draw by Bulgaria, Hoddle stalled on signing an extension to his contract, demanding a pay rise he claimed was due to him.

He finally reached an agreement with the F.A. that linked his pay rise to England's performance in the 2000 European championships — a tournament for which they are now struggling to qualify.

The New Year began with more negative publicity when he was divorced from his wife of 18 years because of his adultery.

Now, just when he hoped attention would be turning back to the pitch ahead of next month's Wembley friendly against world champions France, Hoddle finds himself back on the front pages.

If England had won the World Cup, Hoddle would have been forgiven all his foibles and Eileen Drewery would have probably appeared alongside him in the New Year's Honours List.

Instead his job is once again on the line. "I have been misconstrued, misunderstood and misinterpreted," he said on Saturday.

It is now unclear how long he will actually be in the top job given this latest PR nightmare. It's a far cry from the days of Alf Ramsey's England.

At least Alf, while as boring as buggery on and off the park, was relatively normal.

HALL OF FAME ADDS GUNNERS TRIO

Three key figures in Arsenal's success in the 1990s, skipper Tony Adams, goalkeeper David Seaman and former striker Ian Wright, were among six players voted into the English premier league's Hall of Fame.

The others were former Chelsea player-manager Ruud Gullit, now manager of Newcastle United, ex-Manchester United and Chelsea striker Mark Hughes, now of Southampton, and Ian Rush, who played in the premier league with Liverpool, Newcastle and Leeds United. He is now at second division Wrexham.

All six were voted in by fans which, said Wright, made the accolade particularly welcome.

The 34-year-old forward, who signed for West Ham this season after eight years at Highbury, said: "It is always special when the public vote for you, it is really fantastic."

Former Dutch international Gullit, who finished his playing career at Chelsea, said: "This is one of the biggest honours you can get. It means you will not be forgotten after a while and are appreciated by a lot of people. It is one of the reasons you play football."

The first six members of the Hall of Fame, due to open in London in May, were named last September as Peter Schmeichel, Eric Cantona, Alan Shearer, Les Ferdinand, Gianfranco Zola and Dennis Bergkamp.

Everton's failure to score in their 1-0 defeat by Nottingham Forest in the premier league means they have created an unwanted English scoring record.

No team has ever scored as few goals at this stage of the season in English league history.

Everton, booed off at the end by their own fans, have now scored only three home league goals this season in 12 matches — one fewer than the previous all-time low of four goals in 12 matches set by Woolwich Arsenal in the old first division in the 1912-13 season.

Woolwich Arsenal, who won only one home league match all season, finished with 11 home league goals in their 19 home matches and were relegated at the end of the season.

Forest won for the first time after a run of 19 league matches without a win thanks to a 51st minute goal from Dutch striker Pierre Van Hooijdonk.

Ronaldo has stepped into the debate over Zinedine Zidane's future and dealt a crushing setback to Manchester United's hopes of pulling off the biggest transfer in their history.

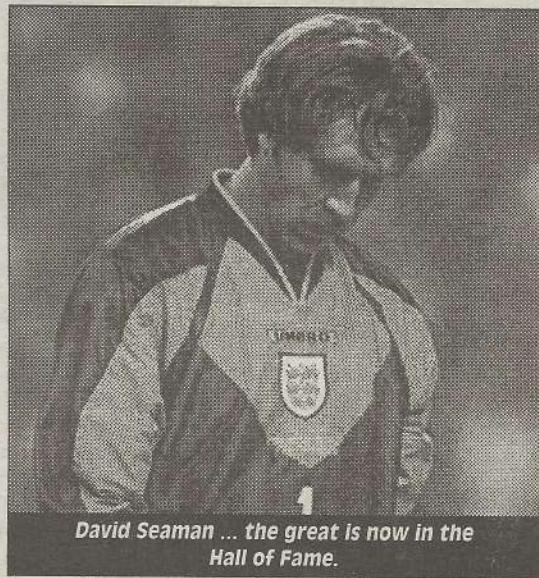
United boss Alex Ferguson was already locked in a battle with Juventus counterpart Marcello Lippi after lining up a summer move for the inspirational France midfielder.

Lippi will take command at Inter Milan at the end of the season and has made it clear he wants to take Zidane with him. Now the odds against United appear to be insurmountable after a plea by Ronaldo for the 26-year-old to join him at the San Siro and help turn Inter into European champions.

Money, inevitably, was at the root of it, as Ronaldo openly admitted.

The Brazil striker became a part-owner of Inter after a remarkable round of negotiations which underlined his bargaining power over a new deal.

Inter agreed to his demand for a wage increase and made certain he went away happy by awarding him shares which amount-



David Seaman ... the great is now in the Hall of Fame.

ed to a five per cent stake in the club.

The possibilities then became glaringly obvious to him when he teamed up with Zidane for a Rest of the World clash against Italy — and established an instant rapport.

Now that I'm a shareholder I want to maximise my profits,' he said. 'That is one of the rewards for making the club successful.'

'There is no doubt in my mind that Zinedine is the person to help me do that. He is the man I want alongside me at Inter because I know he will supply me with even more chances to score goals.'

Lippi ends his four-year reign at Juventus this summer and has echoed Ronaldo's sentiment that Zidane's best interests would be served by a move to Inter.

Zidane's money-making prospects, as well as Ronaldo's, are also counting against United.

He currently earns around £30,000 a week and, according to sources in France, has recently complained about lagging behind other major names in Italy's Serie A.

It is understood he will seek to double his wages at the end of the season, whether he stays in Turin or moves to Milan or Manchester.

As if personal terms were not daunting enough for any potential buyer, Juventus are widely expected to demand around £20million before releasing Zidane from a contract which runs until 2003.

United have not given up hope but would have to smash the British transfer record and make Zidane far and away the highest paid player on their books.

The incentive for such an outlay is that the Juventus playmaker's guile and expertise could be the difference between being crowned European champions and another near miss.

Ferguson knows that and is so desperate to add the Champions League to his haul of trophies at Old Trafford that he is still exploring ways of competing with Juventus and Inter.

Zidane himself insists his future is still in the balance, saying: 'I could go to Inter or stay where I am — or even move abroad.'

The alternatives are all appealing and it's going to need some careful thought before I make up my mind.'

COLLY'S ALL STRESSED OUT

Aston Villa striker Stan Collymore has entered a clinic to try to deal with his stress problem, the club said. Villa manager John Gregory, speaking after his team lost 2-1 at Newcastle United (see next page) said: "He went into a clinic last week (Friday) and is likely to remain there until next Friday."

"It is something we could have done without ... we could have done with him."

After Collymore missed Villa's F.A. Cup home defeat by Fulham last Saturday there was speculation that he had walked out on the club.

Villa said on Monday that Collymore was to seek counselling for stress and that the club would stand by him but Gregory has struggled to hide his frustration with his 20,000 pounds-a-week (\$32,930) striker.

"I find it very hard to understand ... I really thought he had changed and that things were finally working out for him after all his past problems," Gregory said.

"We are giving Stan the same support we would give any of our players. But how it pans out God only knows. I'm not a social worker, I'm a football manager."

"I wonder what a player at (third division) Rochdale, whose contract runs out in three months and who has got a mortgage and two kids, thinks of it all."

Collymore, 28, joined Villa for seven million pounds (\$11.7 million) in May 1997 but failed to show any consistency and has struggled to make the first team in the last two months.

He has had a troubled career, being shunned by team mates at Nottingham Forest after making it clear he wanted to leave, and failing to make any impact at Liverpool after arriving for a then British record fee of 8.5 million pounds (\$14.10 million) in 1995.

He has also had problems off the pitch, being involved in a much-publicised fight during the World Cup with his TV presenter girlfriend.

He was due in court last Monday on a speeding charge but the hearing was adjourned.

Compiled by and written by

Daryl Katz

UK

English FA Cup highlights

COVENTRY V LIVERPOOL

Coventry City kept their excellent recent record against Liverpool intact when they defeated Gerard Houllier's Anfield outfit 2-1 at Highfield Road.

Coventry had the better of a dour and scrappy first half, played on a badly cut up pitch. While the home side dominated territory and possession through their midfield pairing of Gary McAllister and George Boateng, overall there was little in the way of creativity or invention.

There was no sign of the traditional Liverpool passing game on the poor surface. The opening 45 minutes saw a surfeit of long balls over the top and a shortage of clear goalscoring opportunities.

Houllier gave a debut to his latest signing, Cameroon international Rigobert Song. The big defender proved one of the bright spots for the visitors, adding power and composure to their pressurised back line.

Noel Whelan provided the first threatening moment for the home side nine minutes in, running through on goal but seeing his shot smothered. A spell of sustained Coventry pressure followed, but David James never looked troubled.

After 22 minutes Gary McAllister sent a free kick just over, and six minutes later Whelan had the ball in the net, only to see the goal disallowed for offside.

Just after the half hour, Liverpool manufactured their best chance of the opening half. Jamie Redknapp split the Coventry defence with a fine pass that saw Patrik Berger through on goal. The Czech striker could not capitalise however, and dragged his shot wide.

Even the normally clinical Michael Owen could not find his shooting boots, firing high and wide shortly before the interval.

With neither side seeming remotely capable of breaking the deadlock, the half time whistle came as a relief.

The game improved markedly after the interval, however. Coventry again emerged as the dominant force, with Liverpool struggling to find any kind of fluency.

Just two minutes after the break, Huckerby used his close control to manufacture some space in the Liverpool penalty area, but fired his shot wide of the target.

Owen appeared the most likely source of a goal for the visiting side, and ten minutes into the second period he produced the best Liverpool effort to that point. Berger found the 19-year-old in space on the Liverpool left, and he fired a curling shot past goalkeeper Magnus Hedman, only to see it come back off the crossbar.

Just on the hour, Coventry took a deserved lead through the influential Boateng. Substitute Gary Breen sent over a curling cross from the left and the Liverpool defence seemed unaware of any danger.

They paid the price for their negligence as Boateng, making a surging late run into the penalty area, beat David James to the ball and found the back of the net with a glancing header.

The pace of the game increased further after the goal,



Coventry's Tront Soltvedt tangles with the Guv, Paul Ince.

and within a minute Liverpool attempted to hit back through Berger, who shot powerfully but straight at Hedman.

Just a minute later, Huckerby fired in a low shot at the near post, but James managed to make the save. Coventry raised the tempo further as the game opened up. Twenty minutes from time another incisive move saw Froggatt run through on goal, but James came quickly from his line to smother the shot.

A minute later, Coventry doubled their lead with another inspiring piece of play from Boateng. The Dutchman floated a superb chip over the Liverpool defenders to find Whelan in space, and he duly lobbed the ball over the advancing goalkeeper.

Twelve minutes from time, Whelan almost turned provider when he sent Huckerby clear, but James comfortably gathered the resulting shot.

Two minutes later, Froggatt set up Whelan with a shooting opportunity 20 yards out. The striker unleashed a powerful drive, forcing James to make a fine save at full stretch.

Liverpool showed more urgency in the dying minutes as Houllier made an array of offensive substitutions. Their increasingly desperate attacking yielded a reward three minutes from time when Steve McManaman fired the ball high into the net from close range.

The final minutes proved frantic, but Liverpool could not find the equaliser, ultimately paying the price for a largely uninspiring performance.

Deep into stoppage time, Huckerby almost secured a third for Coventry with a surging run and shot.

Coventry manager Gordon Strachan has never lost confidence in his players, despite a poor run of results. Today they rewarded him with a performance full of determination and ran out deserving winners.

Houllier will know that his inconsistent Liverpool side has much room for improvement. A team cannot live by strikers alone and despite the presence of the impressive Song, old problems resurfaced as their defence again looked fragile, indecisive and lacking in confidence.

provide Tottenham with a contentious equaliser.

Just a minute later, referee Neale Barry dismissed Jason Wilcox for a late lunge on Spurs midfielder Allan Nielson.

Following the dismissal, Rovers defended desperately to earn their point.

Tottenham, without the injured David Ginola, worked hard to make their numerical superiority count. Rovers held out though, denying George Graham his first away win in the premiership since taking charge.

While being pleased with the determination shown by his side, Kidd will be more than a little concerned about their recent disciplinary record.

Wilcox was the eighth Blackburn player to be shown the red card this season, and the third in successive home games. Ashley Ward and Filan also picked up needless bookings for dissent and the last thing Rovers need in their current precarious position is to lose players to suspension.

However it is a credit to their fighting spirit, something missing in Roy Hodgson's final few weeks in charge, that they were able to keep Tottenham at bay.

EVERTON V NOTT' FOREST

Nottingham Forest finally ended a horror run when they secured their first victory in 20 league matches, defeating Everton 1-0 at Goodison Park.

Forest's recently appointed manager, the flamboyant Ron Atkinson, fielded three new signings — John Harkes, Carlton Palmer, and Staale Stensaas, leaving Hugo Porfirio on the bench.

The game proved dour and uninspiring for long spells. Palmer, playing in the centre of the Forest defence, looked impressive and kept the pacy Danny Cadamarteri in check.

Everton should have taken the lead after 25 minutes. Mitch Ward's shot hit a defender and bounced into the path of Nick Barmby as he ran into the box.

Barmby rounded goalkeeper Dave Beasant and the ball broke for Cadamarteri 10 yards out, but Stensaas hurled himself across the six yard box to smother the shot.

Just after the half hour Barmby found John Oster, who turned cleverly in the box and forced Beasant to turn his shot over the bar.

Thomas Myhre had barely been involved but after 43 minutes he was shocked by a long-range drive from Stensaas and allowed the ball to cannon off his chest to the edge of the box.

Pierre Van Hooijdonk retrieved the ball and laid it back for an unmarked Alan Rogers, who blazed his shot high over the bar.

Bakayoko entered the fray at half time to give Everton more of a cutting edge up front, but it was Forest who looked the bigger threat. They almost took the lead after 50 minutes.

When Alan Rogers crossed from the left, the ball cleared everyone to find an unmarked Van Hooijdonk on the far right of the box. The Dutchman took aim and drilled a shot into the turf and up over the bar.

A minute later Rogers crossed again, finding Van Hooijdonk totally unmarked coming in on the right. This time he controlled the ball, moved inside and cracked his shot home off the despairing Dave Unsworth on the line.

After 61 minutes Forest could have scored again



Everton's Nick Barmby ... played well but Forest won under Big Ron.

when Myhre deflected a Steve Stone shot wide of the far post.

The crowd were on Everton's backs now and a touch of desperation began to creep in.

Oster created a glorious chance for Bakayoko, but in attempting to clip the ball round Beasant from 10 yards, he managed only to clear the far post.

Beasant then saved a Bakayoko header and Unsworth slashed a shot wide of the far post from close range, but Palmer and his fellow defenders kept the home side at bay.

It was a siege by the end, Branch missing from point blank range and Beasant making a wonderful save when Barmby went clear.

Everton could not find the equaliser, however, and are now in danger of being dragged back into the relegation dogfight. They will continue to incur the wrath of their fans until they can rediscover their scoring touch at home.

NEWCASTLE V ASTON VILLA

Newcastle United dealt a heavy blow to Aston Villa's championship hopes defeating John Gregory's side 2-1 at St James Park.

United were rampant up front and effective at the back, the margin of victory flattering Villa in the end.

Alan Shearer broke his scoring drought in the league when he powered home a fourth-minute header from a Stephen Glass cross to give his side the perfect start.

Temuri Ketsbaia continued his resurgence with the sort of performance that excited the home supporters when he first arrived on Tyneside. After 26 minutes he extended the Newcastle lead.

Shearer's neat ball inside former Magpie Steve Watson was perfect for Glass, and when he slid his cross along the six-yard line, Ketsbaia slotted home unopposed.



Kevin Keegan during the midweek testimonial for Peter Beardsley.

Ketsbaia, but although he connected well from the edge of the box, his effort was just too high.

Villa had little of any value to look back on, Julian Joachim going wide with a clever volley and Paul



Shearer and Southgate ... the England striker is back in good scoring touch.

Merson shooting past the post just before the interval.

More worrying was their frailty at the back, with Shearer giving Gareth Southgate a torrid time. Their defensive woes intensified when Ugo Ehiogu left the field after a kick in the face as he challenged Shearer for a bouncing ball. Simon Grayson took his place.

Newcastle continued in similar vein after the break, Michael Oakes turning away Dietmar Hamann's blistering free-kick within seconds of the restart.

Villa managed to get themselves back into the game after 61 minutes with a superb strike from Merson.

Gareth Barry's ball was laid off by Joachim and the former Arsenal and Middlesbrough striker thumped a right foot shot past Shay Given and into the top corner from 20 yards.

United seemed undeterred however, and went on to create a hatful of further chances with Ketsbaia, Nikos Dabizas and Andreas Andersson all going close as the game wore on.

Villa produced little in response, and as the title race becomes tighter they will need a vast improvement on this performance if they are to maintain their challenge.

BLACKBURN V TOTTENHAM

Ten-man Blackburn Rovers defended desperately late in the game to earn a 1-1 draw with Tottenham Hotspur at Ewood Park.

Brian Kidd will have been heartened by the battling display of his side, as well as the encouraging debut of Matt Jansen, signed recently from Crystal Palace.

The young striker showed pace, skill and composure as he repeatedly tormented the Spurs defence. After beating England international Sol Campbell on several occasions, he finally secured the opening goal two minutes before half time.

Collecting the ball 20 yards out with his back to goal, he half-turned Campbell and unleashed a volley which sailed inside Ian Walker's post.

Things turned sour for Rovers just after the hour, however. First, Spurs striker Les Ferdinand appeared to collide with goalkeeper John Filan as the two jumped for a high ball.

While Filan managed to stop Ferdinand's follow-up effort, he could only palm the ball against the onrushing Steffen Iversen.

The ball flew off the Norwegian and into the net to

Compiled and written by

Daryl Katz

UK

Premier League highlights

M'BROUGH V WIMBLEDON

Leicester City held out for a goalless draw with Middlesbrough at the Riverside Stadium on Saturday, courtesy of a fine performance from American goalkeeper Kasey Keller.

Keller frustrated Middlesbrough with a string of fine saves to earn Leicester a point in a dour match.

The home side produced a lacklustre performance, unable to string together more than four consecutive passes as Leicester, missing Neil Lennon, Muzzy Izzet and striker Emile Heskey, held firm.

The first half had been all about Keller against Middlesbrough.

Opportunities were rare but the Leicester goalkeeper was always ready and waiting.

Cooper provided the first test after just 10 minutes, but Keller saved well from the defender's 25-yard drive.

Boro goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer also enjoyed a little piece of the action when he was forced into a good save by Gerry Taggart's header a minute later.

On the half-hour Keller's agility was fully tested when he had to palm away a Cooper header from Gascoigne's free-kick as he fell backwards.

After 32 minutes the goalkeeper again proved the hero. Briane Deane sent Hamilton Ricard clear and the Colombian pushed past Pontus Kaamark to strike a firm shot, but Keller stuck out his legs to deny the striker his 14th goal of the season.

Two minutes from the break, Keller was swift to deny Mustoe from 12 yards following his one-two with Ricard.

Four minutes into the second half, Steve Walsh connected with a Theo Zagorakis cross but could not guide his header goalwards.

Dean Gordon saved the day for Middlesbrough in the 67th minute with a last-ditch tackle on substitute Stuart Campbell after a great ball from Tony Cottee.

Seconds later, Keller again used quick thinking after a mix-up between Andy Impey and Taggart left Deane free six yards out. The Leicester goalkeeper was swift off his line to save the day again.

Bryan Robson urged his side further forward and threw on Phil Stamp and Mikkel Beck in place of Mustoe and Deane in the 75th minute.

A resilient Leicester side are a frustrating experience for any home team however, and they cruised to their third consecutive league clean sheet away from Filbert Street.

Meanwhile, a London derby between Wimbledon and West Ham at Selhurst Park produced another scoreless match.

Joe Kinnear's Dons never found top gear as West Ham's new signings failed to inspire an away win.

Harry Redknapp will have been delighted to keep a clean sheet though, after seeing his side concede eight goals in their two previous league outings.

John Hartson was made skipper for the day against his former side, but he had a quiet game as goalmouth action was in short supply.



New Hammer ... Italian madman
Paolo Di Canio



New West Ham signing Mark Foe and the Dons' Jason Euell (dark shirt).

Hammers manager Harry Redknapp gave Cameroon international Marc-Vivien Foe a full debut, but the midfielder struggled to adjust to the pace of the game.

West Ham's other midweek signing, Paolo Di Canio, appeared in his white boots for the last 18 minutes but was unable to mark his return from exile with a goal.

Joe Cole and Paul Kitson gave the Dons defence a few problems early on, Cole failing to capitalise on several opportunities.

Wimbledon offered little going forward, particularly in the first-half.

Hartson had a back-post header saved and Efan Ekoku should have done better after his strike-partner found him with a neat header from long Neil Sullivan kick.

Ekoku went close again after the break and Jason Euell saw his late effort saved by goalkeeper Shaka Hislop as the game ended goalless.

Southampton chalked up their fifth league victory of the season at The Dell surging to a 3-0 win over David O'Leary's Leeds United.

The home side, humiliated 7-1 by Liverpool in their previous outing, produced a superb display which made a mockery of their lowly position on the table.

Despite losing inspirational midfielder Matt Le Tissier after just ten minutes, Southampton turned on the style as Leeds struggled throughout.

The visitors had two clear openings, both of which fell to Jimmy-Floyd Hasselbaink but on each occasion his shooting with his feared right foot let him down.

Southampton had to wait until the 31st minute but once Hassan Kachoul had put them ahead there was no way back for United.

When Stuart Ripley sent over a corner from the right, Mark Hughes saw his effort blocked. The ball fell for Jason Dodd however, and his shot was flicked in by Moroccan midfielder Kachoul for his fourth goal in eight starts.

Southampton went further ahead in the 62nd minute, Kachoul once again involved.

He turned inside a challenge and from 15 yards fired in a shot which goalkeeper Nigel Martyn managed to block. After James Beattie hit the rebound against the post there was no further reprieve for Leeds and

Matthew Oakley blasted into the roof of the net for his second of the season.

Southampton played with renewed confidence and went further up front in the 86th minute through the perseverance of Beattie who shrugged off a challenge from Lucas Radebe to set up the easiest of openings for Egil Olsenstad.

The home side also lost substitute Stuart Ripley in the 82nd minute after he had sustained a leg injury, giving teenager Wayne Bridge the chance to join the barrage on the Leeds goal as Southampton went in search of a fourth.

SHEFF. WED V DERBY

Derby County secured a 1-0 victory over Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough aided by the dismissal of Wednesday goalkeeper Pavel Srnicek.

The match seemed destined for a goalless draw, which would have been Wednesday's fifth at home this season, until Derby made the breakthrough in the 54th minute.

With the Rams short of firepower up front, Paulo Wanchope serving the last of a three-match ban and

replacing Dean Sturridge, Christie chased a through-ball and was caught just outside the area by the flailing arm of Srnicek.

The contact seemed minimal, but the way he went down and the fact that he stayed down led to referee David Elleray producing the red card for the Czech international.

Danny Wilson introduced Kevin Pressman, the replacement goalkeeper having little to do as Wednesday's ten men searched in vain for the equaliser



Emerson Thome of Sheff Wed and the Derby defence.

Deon Burton out with a hamstring injury, it was left to defender Spencer Prior to see Derby home.

Scotland Under-21 international Kevin Harper managed to hook a hopeful ball into the box from the bye-line, with Prior on hand to head home.

Three minutes later came a moment of controversy involving young Derby striker Malcolm Christie. After

throughout the remainder of the second half.

Wednesday looked more effective with ten men than they had with eleven, but although they deserved to pull level it was not to be.

Their day was summed up by the injury time effort of Petter Rudi, which trickled through a crowd of players only to shave a post.

RANGERS V ABERDEEN

Rangers scored twice in the last five minutes to beat Aberdeen 4-2 at Pittodrie and move nine points clear in the Scottish premier league.

Rangers were down to 10 men and hanging on for a 2-2 draw when Jorg Albertz, with an 86th minute penalty, and Andrei Kanchelskis in the last minute stunned the home crowd.

Rangers now have 50 points, nine clear of Kilmarnock, who drew 0-0 at home to Dundee. Third-placed Celtic, a further seven points back, play host St Johnstone.

Even Rangers coach Dick Advocaat admitted that he did not expect the win as the game entered its final phase. "Sometimes you need a bit of luck," he said. "And scoring twice within five minutes is maybe a bit lucky."

Rangers had scored twice within 90 seconds to take early control. Sergio Porrini netted a 10th minute header from Giovanni van Bronckhorst's free kick and then Neil McCann's pace allowed Rod Wallace to score his 20th goal of the season.

A diving header from veteran striker Mike Newell in the 35th minute gave Aberdeen hope and then Eoin Jess equalised in the 51st minute with a fierce shot following a free kick in the six yard box.

Rangers defender Scott Wilson was sent off on the hour for his second bookable offence, but as Aberdeen pressed for the winner, Kanchelskis was brought down and Albertz hammered in the penalty.

Rangers then broke away in stoppage time and Kanchelskis beat stranded goalkeeper Jim Leighton to make it 4-2.

"We played better with 10 men than 11 because everyone knew what to do," said Advocaat. "After going 2-0 up, we got weaker and weaker."

Motherwell defeated Hearts for the second time in six days as they followed up their Scottish Cup win with a 2-0 win at Tynecastle Stadium.

Teenage striker Lee McCulloch's 51st minute goal and another from substitute Derek Adams in the 71st minute sealed the visitors' success.

The bottom two clubs, Dundee United and Dunfermline, drew 1-1 at Tannadice, with Kjell Olofsson's 32nd minute header putting United ahead before Andy Smith equalised in the 46th minute.

The match saw United's Maurice Malpass make his 800th appearance.

Dunfermline remain bottom with 10 points from 23 games, three points behind United.





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